

THE  
ANTI-COVENANT,  
Or, a sad  
COMPLAINT,  
Concerning  
The new *Oath* or *Covenant* :

Presented in a Letter to a deare and intimate  
Friend, with earnest request for his advice and prayers.

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By a true loyall Subject, and lover of the  
PARLIAMENT.

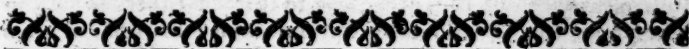
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*The Anti-Covenant, Or,  
A sad complaint concerning the new Oath, &c.*



Eare Friend and Brother, it is not unknowne to the world, as well as to those sober and pious Christians, that are of our society and acquaintance, what an honourable and reverend esteeme the very name of Parliament hath alwayes carried with us two, and how observant we have beene of their commands, without disputing their power or integrity. When the Protestation was enjoyed, we willingly and chearfully tooke it, hoping thereby to give sufficient testimony both to the King and Parliament, and to all others that should otherwise scruple it, of our love and zeale to the true established Protestant Religion, of our loyalty and obedience to our gracious Sovereigne, of our honour and esteeme of both Houses of Parliament, and their just power and priviledges, and of our sense and care of the rights and liberties of the subject: and this solemne Oath we have endeavoured to observe and keepe. When the Poll-mony and great Subsidy were granted, both by King and Parliament we most readily paid both. When the distressed condition of Ireland was recommended to us, we cheerefully contributed: Nay, when the Propositions were made to us, for plate, money, and horse, to fetch our good King from his evill Counsellours, (it being declared to us by some of the members of the House of Commons, and others of their Commissioners, that his Majestie was desirous to come from them, and that those about him would fly from him upon the appearance of the Parliaments forces, without striking one stroke) wee were perswaded to lend liberally upon the Publike Faith towards that service: And since that, upon severall new suggestions, we have given such credit to some Members of both Houses Speeches, and to some Preachers, (whom they have countenanced, if not sent amongst us) that we have not with-holden from the

Parliament what we have been able to spare. Neither did we stop here (though our speed was by this time well taken off) but often and often since, partly out of feare, and partly out of hope; feare of being (after all this) reputed Malignants (a name more odious then Turke, Pagan, or Papist) and hope at last of an Accommodation, (a mercy too great for this sinfull Nation as yet to partake of) we have by our wives, kindred, or freinds, more then once subministred to the pressing necessities of the Parliaments forces. But now (deare Brother) what shall we do? When all that we have done hitherto, will keepe neither our houses from plundering, nor our persons from imprisonment, nor our names from being Malignant, nor our wives and children from beggery and misery, unlesse we will wound our consciences, and hazard our soules by horrid and palpable perjury. Oh, that we had but foreseen this imposing upon our soules and consciences, when first the opening of our purses was called for; but it was Gods just judgement upon us for our sinnes: first, to blind us so long, till we had made a rod for our selves, and then to awe us with that rod, till our severe masters have brought us to that undoubted triall, whether we feare God or them, whether wee love our soules, or our estates and liberties most. But what is the matter? Why, read, and the Lord give you understanding.

Whereas the Lords and Commons now assembled in Parliament have declared, That there hath beene, and now is, a Popish and traitterous plot, &c. as it followeth in the Introduction and Covenant to be taken by the Armies and Kingdome.

(With one clause more added in the Lords and Commons Oath, for their not laying downe Armes.) This is the new Vow and Covenant taken by the Lords and Commons now assembled in Parliament, and voted by them to be taken by the Armies and Kingdome. together with the Introduction, declaring the grounds and reasons inducing them thereunto.

I know it is not fit for private men to be too inquisitive into, much lesse censorious of the decrees and ordinances of publike States, unlesse it be where such decrees and ordinances concerne the soules and consciences of men, and there every man is bound both diligently to examine, and discreetly to judge whatsoever is enjoyned him, before he submit himselfe thereunto; as also to counsell and advise his brethren. Be pleased then, deare Brother (for so I have ever called

called and esteemed you) to give me leave to acquaint you with my thoughts, both of this Oath and its Introduction: and wherein I erre (as who is infallible? not the Composers themselves, much lesse any private man, and least of all my selfe, the weakest of ten thousand) I beseech you be my gentle corrector, and friendly instructor. And first I begin with the Introduction.

The reasons and grounds of imposing and taking this new Oath, here alleaged, are principally these three:

1. For that the Lords and Commons have declared, that there hath beene and now is, a Popish and traiterous plot for the subversion of the true Protestant Reformed Religion, and the liberty of the Subject, and that in pursuance thereof, a Popish army hath beene raised, and is now on foot in divers parts of this Kingdome.

2. That the Lords and Commons have further in a solemne manner declared, vowed, and covenanted, That in order to the security and preservation of the true Protestant Religion, and liberty of the Subject, they will not consent to the laying downe of Arms, so long as the Papists, now in open warre against the Parliament, shall by force of armes be protected against the justice thereof.

3. For that the Lords and Commons have declared that there hath been a traiterous and horrid designe lately discovered by the great blessing and especiall providence of God, of divers persons to joyne themselves with the Armies raised by the King, and to destroy the Forces raised by the Lords & Commons in Parliament, to surprize the Cities of London & Westminster, with the Suburbs, and by Armes to force the Parliament; all which reasons are amplified with an assertion. That the said Lords and Commons do find by constant experience, That many wayes of Force and treachery are continually attempted to bring to utter ruine and destruction the Parliament & Kingdom, & that which is dearest, the true Protestant Religion. And then followes the inference or conclusion, that for the preventing & withstanding the same, they have thought fit, that all, &c. should bind themselves each to other in a sacred vow and covenant, in manner and forme as followeth, *I A. B. in humility and reverence, &c.*

*The grounds and reasons in their order.*

First, we are told, That the Lords and Commons now assembled in Parliament have declared, that there hath beene, and now is a popish

popish & traiterous plot for the subversion of the true Protestant Religion, and the Liberty of the Subject. And that in pursuance thereof, &c. This is the first *Credendum*, set forth to usher in our *Jurandum*: this we must believe, therefore thus and thus we must sweare. But why must we believe this? because the Lords and Commons have Declared it. I owe the Lords and Commons my obedience in a subordinate way, next and immediately under my King: but I do not yet know that I owe them my Faith, in that supreme way as to believe whatsoever they declare. Nay, I know the contrary; and therefore I will be bold to examine the truth of this *credendum*, so far as I am able, before I give up my faith unto it.

That there hath beene in this Kingdome a Popish and trayterous plot, for the subversion of the true Protestant Reformed Religion, is recorded to us, and to our posterities, with an Act of Parliament for an Anniversary commemoration of our deliverance from the same. And I doubt not but there have beene many other plots since, to the same purpose, by the same faction, though God of his mercy hath disappointed them ere they came to any visible maturity: Neither will I altogether free the late potent Faction from intending some such mischeife. Nay further, I am not very slow of heart to beleeve, that there is now at this present in this Kingdome a traiterous plot for the same purpose, which may as well be called a Popish, as an Anabaptistickall, Brownistickall, or Separatistickall plot, the Papists as well as the Anabaptists, Brownists, and other Separatists, contriving and contributing what they can thereunto, and all meeting and consenting in the same positions and doctrines for the effecting thereof. For what *Luther* said of the Anabaptists and Papists, we find by wofull experience true of them all, *Frares sunt, & candidi conjuncti sunt, vulpes, sed capitis diversis: fingunt sese foris magnos hostes esse, cum tamen intus vere idem sentiant, doceant, ac defendant*, they are all brethren, and they are crafty foxes linked together by the tales, though their heads looke divers waies, they outwardly feigne themselves to be great enemies each to other, but inwardly they do verily think, teach, and maintaine one and the same thing. And all these though they pretend too much the liberty of the Subject, yet the truth is, they intend only to enlarge their own liberty and licentiousnesse, and to destroy the just liberty and property, as well as the duty & loialty of all Subjects whatsoever. Thus far it is no difficult matter

to believe that there hath beene and now is a plot for the subversion of the true reformed Protestant Religion, and the liberty of the Subject, and to the lawfull defence of the same thus plotted against, I conceive my selfe already sufficiently bound, not only by my duty, as I am a Protestant and a Subject, but also by my late Oath or Protestation, as I am thereby a new sworne Protestant and Subject. And therefore if that be the true cause why I should take an oath, I have very lately for the same cause already taken one; and I humbly conceive that having made the former oath so lately, for their satisfaction who require this, they ought to rest satisfied with the former, without urging any other; it being a ruled case in law, *Dato iurejurando non aliud queritur quam, an iuratum sit, remissa questione an debeatur, quæ satis probatum sit iurejurando*: when once an oath is given, no further question is to be made, then whether the oath be taken or not, all other questions of the prooffe of what is controverted, are to be remitted as being proved sufficiently by the very making oath thereof; and you well know what the Apostles rule in that case is, *Heb. 6. 16.* an oath for confirmation is (at least ought to be) to them (to those who require the oath) an end of all strife. And the multiplying of oathes is perillous as well to the imposers, as to the takers.

But to go on with the first reason, That in pursuance of such or such a Popish plot, &c. a Popish Army hath beene raised, [and is now on foot in divers parts of this Kingdome; here my faith so staggers that I cannot possibly keepe it up to this assertion, and that for these Reasons:

First, because that an Army cannot truly be called a Popish Army, wherein not five of an hundred are Papists, unless we take Papists in that latitude as to involve all those that embrace, adhere to, and maintaine the established Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England. And if five of an hundred in an Army being Papists may give the name of Popish to that Army, what name can we thinke of for that Army, wherein there are (besides Papists) Anabaptists, Brownists, Familists, and other Sectaries: an hundred for five true Reformed Protestants? Tis not denied but that there are now in the Kings Army too many that are Papists, and yet there are no more Papists in that Army, then ought to be there; for being Subjects as well as Papists, they are bound both by the Lawes of God and of this Nation, to assist their King in his warres both against forreigne enemies,

mies, and against native rebells and usurpers: and the King is bound to protect them against spoile, rapine, and other oppression, aswell as his other Subjects. It is ( I solemnly professe ) a fore greife to my soule (& so I am confident 'tis to all really religious Protestant soules besides) that ever our King, who hath beene so long, and still is, so eminent a Defender of the true Protestant Religion, should neede the assistance of Papists, to defend his Royall person, honour, and estate, as 'tis a shame to our Religion it self, that Papists should shew their Loyalty and Allegiance to their King in such a defence, when so many, that would be reputed the only true Protestants, either take up or maintaine the taking up armes against him. This scandall to the Protestant Religion would scarce ever be wiped off, were there not (blessed be God for it) forty Protestants to one Papist, that chearfully and valiantly assist the King in these present warres, with their lives and estates. Secondly, if the Army raised by His Majesty, and now on foot in divers parts of this Kingdome, be a Popish Army, it were worth the knowing, when it became so, or when at least it became to be so reputed, For that magnanimous and royall army which hath ever attended his sacred person, I find severall Declarations of both Houses of Parliament, wherein they who levied those forces, and they that were levied, have beene called ill affected persons, Cavaliers, Delinquents, Malignants, and the like; but scarce the name of Papists was for a long time mentioned in any of them. Since that, I find Papists, a Jesuiticall faction, Prelaticall Clergy, and discontented persons added to the former; and all called Assistants in and to the Forces prepared; but as yet they were not called a Popish Army, and it seemes there was not the least cause why they should be so stiled; for that no sooner was the Name of Papists or Jesuiticall faction mentioned by them, as having ought to do in that service for the King, but presently his Sacred Majesty caused a Proclamation to issue forth; given at his Court at York August 10. 1642. expressly commanding, that no person or persons whatsoever, being Popish Recusants, should come to His Court, contrary to the law in that case provided, or take any office or place, or list himselfe as a souldier in His Service. And though the King at the time of that terrible battle at Edgehill had admitted some few Papists of eminent abilities in command and conduct into His Service; yet He is graciously pleased to yeeld such a faire and reasonable



reasonable account thereof in His Declaration to all His loving Subjects after His late victory against the Rebels on Sunday 23 of October 1642. as must needs be to all that will credit the word of a King, most abundantly satisfactory. And since that battell, (that maske of fighting for the King being then blowne off with their owne priming powder) tis not to be indured in point of Honour by any Protestant that regards the honour of his Religion, that any should say, the Papists have so outstript the Protestants in loyalty, as to win the denomination of the Kings Army to be Popish from their superincressing therein: And (blessed be the Lord for it) they have not the least cause so to brag, for what cause soever others have been pleased so to declare. Then for the Kings Army in the West so long under the command of that valiant and successfull, religious and pious Sir *Ralph Hopton*, I do not remember that amongst all the lyes and slanders, all the calumnies and reproaches, that have beene preached or printed, any have yet beene so wickedly impudent as to call that Popish, or to affirme that any knowne Papists are listed in it. I am sure both Houses of Parliament in their Ordinances made against Sir *Ralph*, and his Forces (*viz.* that in June 27. 1642. for the prevention of a most horrid, wicked and unnaturall designe pursued by Sir *Ralph Hopton*, and his adherents &c. and that made the same day for the assailing of Malignants in the County of Sommerfet, &c.) never call any of those that have assisted him or joyned with him Papists, but only Rebels and Traitors. So that we are forced to looke into the Northerne parts to find out this Popish Army: and for the Army in those parts, though I find some Diurnalls, and other such like lying and slanderous pamphlets, wherein that Army was called Popish, even as its first advancing into Yorkshire; yet I observed that the Lords & Commons assembled in Parliament, did not themselves stile it so, no nor in their Declaration for the suppressing of divers Papists, and other malignant persons in the Counties of Yorke, Northumberland, Westmerland, Cumberland, Lancashire, Cheshire, &c. Novemb. 29. 1642. They therein declare that the Papists; and other malignants, and all affected persons in those Counties had entered into an association, and caused great Forces both of horse and foot to be raised to aid and assist the Popish and malignant party in those parts; but for all this they do not yet brand them with the name of a popish Army; afterwards indeed when they had found that the



name of popish army spread abroad (as I but now said) by Diurnals, and other lying and scandalous pamphlets (the constant pressures to prepare the way for more authenticke Declarations,) had somewhat startled and amazed the poore Country people: then we heare the stile of an Army of Papiſts under the command of the Earle of *Newcastle*, made use of, as in that Declaration of the House of Commons Decemb. 15. 1642. the Declaration of the Lords and Commons still retaining their former stile. But passe by the originall of that army: Did that army as yet ever merit the name of Popish? That there were, and are more Papiſts in that army, then in all the Kings armies throughout the Kingdome I doe verily beleeeve; those Counties out of which it was raised abounding with Papiſts more then other Counties by far. And yet we have beene assured from such as deserve our credit, that all the Papiſts in that army are not a handfull in comparison of the whole body, not above one of fifty, and in all not so many as to make up two Regiments. But why five times so many Papiſts? (if there were so many in this Kingdome) should not be admittid to take up armes for the defence of their Sovereigne, and rights and libertie of the Subject. I never yet heard any argument worth answering, nay how the Papiſts, or any for them, could answer their not taking up Armes in such a case without incurring the guilt of High Treason, is past my resolving. And for the Protestant Religion, which they so much hate, and the Power and Priviledge of Parliament, which they so much maligne; whereas it is objected that it cannot be thought, that they should fight for the defence of either of them: I do conceive that if they might be let alone quiet, and secure without intermedling, their love to either is not so great as to inflame their spirits to such a hazard of their lives for their sakes; but the pressing necessities of the present times ingaging them in a War, and they finding the quarrell to be betwixt the safety of the Kings person, honour, and estate; and the ambitious, seditious and rebellious designs and attempts of some of His Subjects, betwixt Protestants, and some Anabaptists, Brownists and other Sectaries, betwixt the enjoying the just power and priviledges of Parliament, together with their owne lives, goods and estates, and the being spoyled, robbed and deprived of all. or the most of these by the arbitrary power and priviledges of a few Lords and Commons; 'tis no wonder to see them to offer themselves willingly to defend and

maintaine

maintain the former, rather then to endure & suffer the latter. Besides when the Protestants in a Kingdome are imbroyled in a civill warre amongst themselves, or with any factious and schismaticall persons, it would not be wisdome in them to suffer the papists to sit quiet and still if they should desire it, lest when they have weakned each other, the Papists prove too strong for both. But for further satisfaction in this point, I referre you to the Earle of *Newcastle* his excellent Declaration to that purpose, and to that witty and sollid letter of a Worthy (whosoever it was) to his freind in *Lecestershire*.

Now these things premised, thus cleared, I cannot but wonder what is meant by the popish army which hath beene raised, and is now on foot in divers parts of this Kingdome: had we beene told that there is such an army flying in divers parts of this Kingdome, if we could not have seene it, it might happily have beene imputed to the dulnesse and weaknesse of our eye-sight, or to our want of that light, whereby some are able to discover things that never were, but to say there is such an army on foot, and yet no more footsteps of it to be found, is to tell us little lesse then a miracle, and but of little more credit then those late miracles which some of our new apostles have boasted of. Well, but let us indulge them that name, seeing they who can call any things or persons what they please, are pleased so to phrase it. The Army in the North, whereof not above foure or five of an hundred are Papists, is a Popish Army. But why then must it be beleevd that there is a Popish army raised and on foot in divers parts of this Kingdome? Is it because there are divers parts of the North wherein that army is, as *Yorke, Tadesaster, Pomsret, Wakefield, &c.* and all these are parts of this Kingdome; an excellent topicall argument to puzzle a Fresh man with; or is it because they would have the poore long-deceived people to beleevd, that forasmuch as the one part of the Kings army in the North is somewhat Popish, therefore all the Kings army that is now in severall parts of this Kingdome, as *Oxfordshire, Dorsetshire, Sommersetshire, Devonshire, Cornwell, Staffordshire and Worcestershire, &c.* consists most of Papists? certainly it is in this later sense that they desire the phrase Popish army may be understood, or else it would prove but of very litle force to perswade the common people (who blessed be God do generally abominate Popery) either to conceive so much evil of the Kings army, as they would possesse them withall, or else to be-

leeve that there is from them any cause of fearing the subversion of the true reformed Protestant Religion, and so of entering into an oath or covenant to do such and such things as the new Oath requires. And by this time I hope you will excuse me if I do not beleieve that there is a popish army raised, and on foot in divers parts of this Kingdome. Thirdly, I abhorre to let it enter into my thoughts; that any army is raised by the King (as is affirmed) for the subversion of the true Protestant Religion. The Preacher commands me in Gods name (whatsoever some preachers teach their people in their owne and their Masters) not to curse the King, no not in my thoughts, *Eccles. 10. 20.* but should I thinke that the King intends by his Army now on foot, or by any other way or meanes to subvert the true Protestant Reformed Religion; though I should nor for all that curse him no not in my thoughts, yet I must needs think him the most accursed King that ever breathed. He having made so many solemne oaths, vows & protestations, with most deep imprecations annexed, both to live and dye in the true Reformed Protestant Religion himselfe, and to maintaine and defend it in His Subjects. I will minde you only of that one in the head of His Army, Septem. 19. 1643. *I promise in the presence of Almighty God, and as I hope for his blessing and protection, that I will to the utmost of my power defend and maintain the true Reformed Protestant Religion established in the Church of England and by the grace of God in the same will live and die, &c.* And for the liberty of the Subject, together with the just priviledges and freedom of parliament, He did both at that time, and sundry other with the like solemnly vow and sweare their defence and maintenance. Now can it bee thought by any (but such whose thoughts are thoughts of iniquity, *Esay. 59. 7.*) that such a constant and faithfull Defender of the true Protestant Religion for so many yeares, against so many plots and attempts, intimated by this very Declaration, and after so many and so solemne Oaths, Vows and Protestations, should now raise an Army to subvert that Religion, and when it was raised to promise againe in the very head of that Army His best and utmost defence of the same, calling God to witnesse with Him, and desiring neither blessing nor protection from him, but according as he resolved to make good that promise and Protestation; doubtlesse there is very high as much faith in Infidells, and as much charity in the damned spirits as there is in these men that can beleieve such a slander, or entertaine such a suspicion.

In the Declaration of the Lords and Commons to the Kingdome and to the world, Octob. 22. 1642. they account the professing of any thing in the sight of God, the strongest obligation that any Christian, and the most solemn publike faith that any such state as a Parliament can give. They then that will not credit the like profession made by a King, must neither thinke him a Christian, nor esteem him a King. Besides, were there any so wickedly uncharitable and disloyall, as to imagine that the King had an intention to subvert the true Reformed Protestant Religion. Yet how can they think both him, and his evill counsellors, together with the Popish party about him (as every pamphlet takes the liberty, most traiterously, to portray him and his royall attendants) to be all so weak and simple, as to raise an army for the pursuance of that intent, just at that time, when greater forces of Protestants (as they would be thought) were either actually raised, or ready to rise, then he or they could by the eye of flesh see any possibility of levying; and when he wanted both money and armes for those few, that he might hope to levie without doubt, if there had beene any such purpose, that time of all other would not have been chosen for the opportunity. These reasons are of such force with me, that the first reason alleadged for the taking this Oath seemes to me (to say the least of it) altogether unreasonable.

Proceed wee on to the second; it may be that is more ingaging. The Lords and Commons have further in a solemn manner declared, vowed, and covenanted, that in order to the security and preservation of the true Protestant Religion and liberty of the Subject; they will not consent to the laying downe armes, so long as the Papists, now in open warre against the Parliament, shall by force of armes be protected from the justice thereof.

Before this reason will downe with me for a perswading reason to the taking this Oath, I must be satisfied, if possible, in these *Queries*.

1. *Quer.* What doe the Lords and Commons mean by that clause, In order to the security and preservation of the true Protestant Religion, &c. Do they meane that they will never consent to the laying downe armes, &c. No, nor for the security and preservation of the true Protestant Religion: or that because they conceive that the true Protestant Religion cannot be secured and pre-

served, so long as the Papists now in open warre shall, &c. That therefore they will not consent to the laying downe Armes, so long &c. Or is this, In order to, &c. used here for some evading reservation, as the Jesuits have constantly used their, *In ordine ad spiritualia*, (they being the onely men, that I can recall to minde for the present, that ever used this kinde of restriction, or rather indeed, this fast and loose knot of an oath) that so they may evade some oathes formerly taken, or the power of this, in case they can get a faire glosse to be made upon these termes: charity and reverence command mee to take the best interpretation: but an oath should be framed in such plaine cleare termes, as might be understood by all the takers thereof, without much difficulty of exposition: but to leave that to themselves.

2. *Quar.* Whom doe the Lords and Commons understand by Papists now in open warre against the Parliament? whether legally convicted Papists only, or all Papists at large? If all Papists at large, (as I conceive they meane no lesse,) my

3. *Quar.* is: Whether only knowne professed Papists, properly so called? or also all supposed, suspected Papists, commonly so termed? If the former

4. *Quar.* Whether they have proceeded against all such that are now in the Kings army, according to the established Law of this Kingdome, and requiring justice to be done upon them, they have beene by force of Armes protected from the execution thereof?

5. *Quar.* How, or where doth it appeare, that there have beene, or are, any such so protected, especially to such a number, as that the protecting of them ought to move the great Actors and Contrivers for the Kingdomes peace, for that cause to vow, and covenant to continue this unchristian, unnaturall warre, till they be delivered up to their justice.

6. *Quar.* Whether the Queens Majesty Her selfe, be not one of those protected Papists chiefly aimed at?

7. *Quar.* If by Papists they meane all that are supposed, suspected, and by divers termed Papists: whether all those that are called Malignants, or Delinquents, or disaffected persons, and so all that are either of the Kings army, or have beene ayding and assisting to them; are not by them reckoned in that number? So that if the King would deliver up to their justice, all that are Papists indeed, (even

to his deare Queene) withall his armies, yet if hee will not with them deliver up also all his whole armies themselves, or at least as many of them as they shall require, they will not still thinke themselves bound by this vow and covenant, not to lay downe their armes, or to give their consent thereto?

8. *Quer.* Whether the King be not bound in conscience, by the Lawes of God, and of this Kingdome, by his own solemn vowes and protestations, and by the common law of Nature (too much pleaded by some in these dayes, even against the law of Grace it selfe) to defend and protect, and that by force of armes, need so requiring, not onely His owne deare Queene, but all his faithfull and loyall Subjects, both Papists and others, such especially as repaire to him for His sacred persons defence and safety, as well as for their owne protection, and the preservation of their rights and liberties?

9. *Quer.* Whether the King on the one part being so bound to defend and protect both His Queene and the rest now named; and the Lords and Commons now assembled in Parliament, having on the other part taken up Armes, to force all those persons from the Kings defence and protection, and bound themselves by a solemn new oath, never to lay downe their armes againe, so long as any such persons are so protected, whether, I say, can there be possibly, any hope conceived of peace and accommodation, either by way of Treaty, or any other way whatsoever, without the effusion of infinite streams of blood, so much as will make any Christians heart to bleed, but to think on it, and his very joints to loose, and his knees to knock one against another, to have any hand in it, knowing what the hand of God hath written against bloodshed?

10. *Quer.* This being the true case of this Kingdome at this present, whether is not this second reason of the Lords and Commons making such a new covenant as will, (if seconded by ours) cost the expence of so much of our owne, and fellow-brethrens blood, rather a strong reason, why we should abhorre this new oath, by whomsoever it is taken, then any the least inducement to perswade us to take it.

Before I part from this reason, suffer me, I beseech you, to besprinkle a few teares on it, and to part forth a few broken ejaculations concerning those that alleadge it: Mourne on my soule. Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountayne of teares, that I might



might weep day and night for the slaine of the daughter of my people. *Jer. 9. 1.* How are thy mighty men, O England, fallen in the miditt of the battell? *2 Sam. 1. 25.* Yea, how are they slaine from one end of the Land to the other? How have the carcases of thy people beene made as dung upon the open field? Oh thou sword of the Lord; how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put up thy selfe into thy scabbard, rest, and be still. But how canst thou be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given thee a charge against this Land? O God of mercies, as well as Lord of Hosts, we acknowledge that we have deserved it, and we see to our terrour, that they, whom we too much relied on for the setting our peace, have sworne themselves, and would swear us into a perpetuall warre; but we hope thou hast not yet passed such a decree against us. Spare us therefore, we humbly beseech thee, Oh spare thy people, whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood, and let not the sword be made drunke with blood any longer, nor let drunkenesse of spirit, we intreate thee, seale upon our Princes and our wise men, our Captaines and our Rulers, and our mighty men, to cause them to sleepe a perpetuall sleepe; but Lord do thou awaken both them and us, that we may yet at last in this our day of visitation, see and seek those things that concerne our peace.

And now I goe on to the third reason or ground. The Lords and Commons have declared, that there hath beene a treacherous and horrid designe lately discovered, by the great blessing and especiall providence of God, of divers persons to joyne themselves with the armies raised by the King, and to destroy the forces raised by the Lords and Commons in Parliament, to surpriseth the Cities of London and Westminster, with the Suburbes, and by armes to force the Parliament.

If there hath beene a treacherous and horrid designe lately discovered by the great blessing and especiall providence of God, we are all bound upon the knowledge thereof, to magnifie Gods mercy and goodnesse, and to extoll his power and providence for it, and that man shall not want for a curse that shall slight or undervalue to great a blessing: but I see no reason why we should thereupon, or for that cause, rush presently into a Vow or Covenant, and run our Soules into a farre greater hazard then our Bodies were delivered from. But it may be, it was such a treacherous and horrid designe, as may require a Vow and Covenant forthwith to be made by us: 'Tis fit we should



should thoroughly examine whether it be or not, lest otherwise we be guilty of taking Gods name in vaine in the highest degree. All that is made knowne to us concerning this treacherous and horrid designe by the Introduction to this oath (from which the takers thereof are to receive their surest information, and by which principally they are to be induced to take it) is only this. There was a designe of divers persons for these foure ends: 1. To joyn themselves with the armies raised by the King. 2. To destroy the forces raised by the Lords and Commons in Parliament. 3. To surprise the Cities of London and Westminster, with the Suburbes. 4. To force the Parliament by armes. Now let us looke upon this designe a while, with a single, cleare, open eye, neither squint nor blood-shot, neither with a magnifying, nor with a formidable-false-rendring glasse, and discover if we can, wherein the treacherousnesse and horridnesse of it lies. For the first intent of the designe. The joyning of divers persons with the armies raised by the King, 'tis so far from treachery and horridnesse, that he that is an English man, can scarce avoyd the being a Traytor, and so most horrid, that doth not so joyne himselfe with those Armies in some way or other, wherein he is best able to doe his Sovereigne service; and for the discovery thereof, 'tis well knowne not to be so only as is pretended, the Lords and Commons themselves having declared it often and often, and that long since in sundry Declarations, But that either those persons, or those armies with whom they joyne, do aime at, or intend the destroying the forces raised by the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, or the surprising the Cities of London and Westminster, with the Suburbes, or the forcing the Parliament by armes) though they have all three beene a long time spoken of, and two of them againe and againe insisted upon by the Lords and Commons in their Orders and Ordinances) hath never to this day beene proved, but on the contrary, so deeply and solemnly have all these aimes beene protested and sworne against by the King himselfe, and are ready (if that would give any satisfaction) to be disclaimed and renounced upon the oathes of those armies, and the persons joyning with them; that were all other real, but concealed, jealousies and feares as easy to be removed, as those three now pretended, all such forces on both sides would be soone disbanded, and these unnaturall and unchristian warres speedily ended. This indeed is to be expected, and cannot well be avoyded,

ded, if after so many and so gracious overtures of peace, pardon, and all sweet accommodation made by His sacred Majesty, the forces raised by the Lords and Commons shall not onely refuse to lay downe their armes, but use them (as hitherto they have) to the subversion both of the Discipline and Order: as also of the Doctrine and Worship of God established in our Church, to indangering the Kings person, the consumption of his treasure and estate, and to the damage and ruine of his whole Kingdome: and if the Cities of London and Westminster, with the Suburbs thereof shall, as formerly they have, joine with them, and ayd and assist them, both with men, mony, armes, and other warlike provision; and if some of the Members of either or both Houses of Parliament, shall countenance, encourage, justify and maintaine all these ungodly actions, against His Majesties Royall Person, Crowne, and Dignity, Who can blame either those armies rayled by the King, or those persons that joyne with them, if they shall do their utmost, to subdue or destroy those forces, to surprise or bring into subjection those Cities, and to force, or some other way to reduce those Members to their duty and allegiance? Nay, what Christian or Heathen Subjects would not in such a case crie out against them now, and rise up in judgement against them hereafter, if they should doe otherwise? And therefore if this bee the Designe so much talked of, as for my part I beleieve it is, what loyall Subject can say, he had no hand in it? and who but hee that hath had no hand in it, dare say, it was either treacherous or horrid? Oh, but Mr. *Pym* hath declared it so to be, in his Speech at a Common-hall in London, *June 8. 1643.* wherein he shewes the intentions of that Designe to be no lesse then these.

1. To take into their custody the Kings Children, that are in, or about London.
2. To lay hold on all those that they thought could stand in their way, as the Lord *Say*, and the Lord *Wharton*, of the House of Lords, and of the House of Commons, (besides the Lord Major) Sir *Philip Stapleton*, Mr. *Hampden*, Mr. *Strode*, and (which he acknowledged to be an honour to him to be named) Mr. *Pym*.
3. To seize on the Committee of the Militia, and the Magazines within London and Westminster.
4. To releate all the prisoners committed by the Parliament.
5. To make a Declaration to satisfie the people.

Blessed

Blessed be the Lord for it, here is no intention discovered of murdering or butchering any of the Kings children, or of any of the Citizens, or of any of the Members of either Houses of Parliament; no nor of the persons named; neither is there here any resolution intimated of blowing up any part of London or Westminster, or of firing any house therein, but onely of taking the Kings Children into their custody, of laying hold on certaine Lords and Commons, and of seising the Militia, &c. and this, it seemes, in the sense of the contrivers of this oath, is to destroy the forces raysed by the Lords and Commons, to surprize the Cities of London and Westminster, and by armes to force the Parliament, and all this a treacherous and horrid Designe. But how is that made good? Surely the taking of the Kings Children into their custody, (if it were any part of the Designe) is not thought by the Lords and Commons themselves, to have much treachery or horridnes in it, howsoever Mr Pym (to shew his superabundant care of those hopefull branches, for their Royall Stemmes sake) was pleased to make that the first branch of that treacherous and horrid Designe: neither can the releasing of the prisoners committed by the Parliament, (if any such justice were purposed) bee well judged to have much treachery or horridnesse in it: for alas, poore unarmed men all, (men abhorring treachery and all horrid designs so much, that the greatest cause of most of their imprisonment, is their declaming against, and not contributing or consenting unto that Designe, which they know to be both trayterous and horrid) what could they have done, had they beene released? It would be safest for them, if there should be any combustion or mutiny in the Citie or Suburbs (which God forbid) not to come forth of their prisons though they were intreated. Perhaps indeed the making of a Declaration to satisfie the people, might have advanced the Designe not a little; for, it seemes by Mr. Pym's speech, it was some notable, faire, well-compos'd peece, carrying a most specious shew of much intended goodnesse: *viz.* The preservation of Religion, the preservation of the Kings Prerogative, and the preservation of the Liberties of the Subject, and the priviledges of Parliament; and the composers thereof were very confident (as Mr Pym intimates) of the peoples crediting and believing it: for that a thousand of them were to be printed, and they to be set upon Posts and Gates in the most considerable places of the City, and to be dispersed, as much as they could, against the time that the Designe should be put in execution,

as if that would cleare all their intentions, and convince the people of their integrity in undertaking that businesse. And to tell you my judgement of it, for so much as I can collect from Master *Pym*, it was such a piece of a treacherous Designe, that Master *Pym*, was afraid, that it would have gone neere to have betrayed the people into their wits againe; perhaps into their Religion and loyalty, if not into some of their Estates and Liberties: and therefore he lets it not passe without passing this most observable Sentence on it, ratified from his owne practise and experience. There be no designs be they never so ill, but they do put on a maske of some good; for that which is absolutely and apparently evill, hath no congruity with the will of man, and therefore the worst of evils are undertaken under a shew and shadow of goodnesse: sound doctrine, and an excellent caution, I confesse: would to God the People had beene better instructed in it, and more mindfull of it in these times: but yet with reverence to that great Speaker be it spoken, If that intended Declaration which he speakes of, were worthy of no other blame, but its appearing to extraordinary faire and specious (as were there any other reall exception against it, doubtlesse that quicksighted Gentleman would not have balked it (I see no reason, why because by often and late experience it hath beene found, that some Declarations full of Treachery and Mischeife, have appeared faire in shew, therefore this Declaration full of loyalty and goodnesse, should be thought treacherous and mischeivous, only because it was faire in appearance. But then for the other two parts of the designe, *viz.* the laying hold on those persons named, and the seising upon the Militia and Magazines of London and Westminster, together with those that now are the prime managers and disposers thereof; that these were the ready way to destroy the forces raised by the Parliament, to surprise those Cities, and to force the Parliament, seemes clearly to be demonstrated by the forenamed City Orator. Take only the extract of his Arguments in the case. The seising upon the Militia of London and Westminster, must needs be a surprising of those Cities themselves: the surprising of those Cities, is a destroying of the forces raised by the Lords and Commons in Parliament, if not by force, yet by want of supply and maintenance, (observe by the way, what manner of destruction intended against the Parliaments forces, is here acknowledged:) and if the forces raised by the Parliament, were once destroyed

stroyed, (that is, wanted supply and maintenance) and then (which is the most terrible) if those named Members of both Houses, and some few others of their temper and spirit, together with their fast freinds and sworne slaves of the City, were once layed hold on, the rest of both those Honorable Houses, being but the carkase and shadow of a Parliament, (as Mr. *Pym* in his Common-hall speech, doth not only call, but labour to prove them) alas, what would they do? certainly that carkase would move in no other motion, then according as the returning soule, (the known Lawes of the Land, and the just priviledges of Parliament) would steere it, and not according as every furious and factious spirit should think to hurry it: and questionlesse, that shadow would not follow any other, then its owne full, compleat, representative Body; nor a close Committee, or a few seditious, rebellious Citizens. And then tis likely, there would be a sweet correspondence betwixt the King and them, the King yeelding to them as much, as they would in due observance be willing to propound to him, and they granting to the King as much as he could with honour desire of them. And here truly would be such a forcing of the Parliament, as this Kingdome hath not knowne these many yeeres: and yet all this is farre enough from a treacherous and horrid designe. Only thus much (we humbly thanke him for it) Mr. *Pym*s discovery renders visible to every eye, that will not shut it selfe against the light. That were but the Milita of the Cities of London and Westminster, with their Magazines in some mens hands, with whom, (as hath beene at large declared by able and sound Lawyers) the King may of right intrust it; and were but the maintenance and supply which those two Cities subminister to the Parliaments army, withheld or stoppt, and then (which would follow of it selfe, unless they made the more hast to fly from it) were but some few Members of both Houses, together with some busie Citizens, laid hold on, and laid up in hold, (as there are prisons enough, and to spare, ready provided in, and about London) till they could be brought to a legall triall for that Treason, whereof by Proclamation they stand charged by the King, our Land would soone enjoy her glorious rest and peace againe: nay, happily if the last were but acted, we should speedily see the last Act of this bloody Tragedy (wherein this miserable Kingdome is engaged) hilt off, and beaten off the Stage, by its greatest Applauders. And therefore were those few persons, at whom

the late strange, treacherous, horrid designe aymed, men of that piety towards God, and of that tender compassion and bowells towards their bleeding and perishing Country that they pretend to be, they would, *Jonah*-like, (now they see the Church and State, wherein they are imbarqued, ready to be overwhelmed or spilt by the boysterous waves and tempestuous windes of these raging times; and principally for their sakes) deliver themselves up to be cast forth, or otherwise exposed, even to death it selfe, that there might be a calm; and likewise they that have hitherto rowed them, (now they have shewne their love and affection to them, in rowing so hard to see them safe on shore, and see that they cannot, the sea working and growing more and more tempestuous against them, by the mighty co-working of him that commands both sea and wind, and they obey him (me thinks they should, after prayers and cries to God, to keepe them from the guilt of their blood) not take them up, and cast them forth into the sea, but shut them up, and keepe them safe, till they see whether a just legall triall, (so often demanded) will judge them worthy to be cast forth or not; and if it appeare they so deserve, I hope it is neither traiterous nor horrid to say, it were better that milstones were hanged about their necks, and they cast into the bottom of the sea, then that the whole Kingdome for their sakes should be cast away and perish.

And thus we have viewed the three maine pillars upon which the structure of this new oath is built. Now fearing lest all three might prove too weake to raise such a weighty building upon, there is a buttresse or by-arch joyned to them all for their better underproping, plaistered over with these words. And the said Lords and Commons finding by constant experience, that many wayes of force and treachery are continually attempted to bring to utter ruine and destruction the Parliament and Kingdome, and that which is dearest the true Protestant Religion.

This Arch is made up, of the same materials with the three maine pillars, and so it is not materiall whether any other examination bee made of it or not, for they stand and fall together, only we may observe, if you please, that whereas we were told but of one Popish and traiterous plot that hath beene and now is for the subversion of the true Protestant Reformed Religion, &c. as also but of one treacherous and horrid designe, and that lately discovered to destroy &c.



&c. here we are invited (if not commanded) to beleve that many wayes of force and treachery are continually attempted for the same ends. It seemes these many wayes of force and treachery that have beene found by constant experience to be continually attempted to bring to utter ruine and destruction the Parliament and Kingdome, and the true Protestant Religion, were such, as were not worthy of the name of plots or designs, at least not Popish plots or horrid designs; or else they were very unworthy, who having found them out, would not to this day discover what they were; for besides the bringing up of the Northerne Army, and the King going once more then ordinarily attended to surprise the five Members (which must needs be included in the Popish and traiterous plot first mentioned; and hath beene againe and againe answered by His Sacred Majesty) we never heard (till now this traiterous and horrid designe was discovered) of any one way of force or treachery, that ever was assayed to compasse any of the ends here declared: But something must bee said to scare the people (if it be possible) quite out of their wits, loyalty, Religion and all, or else this grand plot of plots, and designe of designs, the taking of this new Oath will hardly take effect.

These premises being laid, this conclusion is enforced, That for the preventing and withstanding the same, they have thought fit, that all who are true hearted, and lovers of their Country should binde themselves each to other in a sacred Vow and Covenant, &c.

Now although (as you know) the premises being false, the conclusion alwayes falls of it selfe; yet because there is more crowded in to this conclusion, then can be inferred from the premises, and we are like to be forced to hold to the conclusion whatsoever the premises are, it will not be amisse to speake a word or two of that also.

First, it is declared that for the preventing, &c. The Lords and Commons have thought fit, &c.

Here are very gentle termes, as though the Contrivers of this Oath desired only to intimate their opinion of the conveniency of taking it, & would compell none to it, but leave it to the liberty of every conscience, whether they would take it or not: when as 'tis to be feared, a few dayes experience will assure us, that it is intended, as the Shibboleth of this Nation, and either take this Oath, and be perjured, (if not worse) or take it not, and be plundered, imprisoned, if not banished from house and Country, will be all the liberty our oppressed consciences



consciencs shall obtaine. But not to prejudice or prophysie. Take the expression as it is. They have thought fit such a Vow or Covenant should be made by all that are, &c. and tis not fit that any that are such should scruple it; Well, but if the taking this solemn oath, or making this sacred Vow and Covenant, be but a thing fitting and convenient, and not of extraordinary, much lesse of extreame necessity: it hath ever beene a ruled case in Divinity; that a solemn oath, sacred Vow or Covenant ought not in such a case to be requiring or made. Besides, (which I must againe and againe put you in minde of) if all that is declared in the introduction to this oath were true, & knowne to us all so to be: We have lately so solemnly protested and sworne in that protestation or oath recommended unto us from the House of Commons: That to our power, and as farre as lawfully we may, we will oppose, and by all good wayes and meanes endeavour to bring to conigne punishment all such, as shall either by force, plots, conspiracies or otherwise, do any thing contrary to the true reformed Protestant Religion established, (so farre especially as that is opposite to Popery, or Popish innovations) or against His Majesties royall Person, Honour, and Estate, or against the power and priviledges of Parliament, or against the Lawfull rights and liberties of the Subject, or against any person that made that protestation in whatsoever he should doe in the lawfull pursuance of the same; that if there be no more aimed at in the imposing this oath, then what is lawfull, just, and faire, in any or all those pretended grounds or reasons alleaged in the introduction for that purpose, we have already as deeply and firmly engaged and bound our selves thereunto as any Christian can possibly require us. They have but little charity, who after an oath made of such and such things so lately, shall now againe require another oath to be taken for the confirmation of the same things. Furthermore, when the King in his going against the Scots, did at Yorke cause an oath to be tendred to the Lords and others then attending His sacred Person, it was answered by the Lords, and that answer accepted and rested in by His Majesty, that they humbly conceived, that noe oath ought to be tendred either to them, or to any other His Majesties Subjects, but what Himselfe and the Lords and Commons assembled in Parlia. had first consented unto. And (which cannot be so soone forgotten) at the beginning of this Parliament, that unhappy oath composed by that unfortunate Convocation, and assented

assented unto by the King, was by the House of Commons (and by the House of Lords too, if I much mistake not) utterly damned, (as the expression then was) and the Members of the Convocation judged guilty of little lesse then a premunire, for that it was by them decreed to be tendred to the Subject without any Act passed in Parliament for the same. We beseech them therefore, that that which was thought reason and Law then, may not be so soone not only thought none, but the flat contrary thought fit, and practised by the same persons.

It followes in the inference, That all that are true hearted and lovers of their Country should binde themselves, &c.

These are conjuring words to the Country people, and of very large compasse; had they declared, that all that are true hearted, and lovers of the true Protestant Reformed Religion, should binde themselves. &c. it might have made Papists, Anabaptists, Brownists, and such like to have startled at it; whereas this calling upon all that are true hearted and lovers of their Country, may chance to fetch them and all in; and the truth is, let each part of this Oath be thoroughly scanned, there will be very little or nothing found in it, but what all Papists, Anabaptists, and Brownists that thinke themselves in their owne sense true hearted, and lovers of their Country, and have not taken the Oath of Alleagiance, Supremacy, and the last Protestation, may more safely swear, vow, or covenant, then they that are true hearted Protestants, and reall lovers of the Reformed Protestant Religion established in the Church of England. All that I can see which may cause them to scruple it, is this: They must swear that they do in their consciences beleieve, That the forces raised and continued by the two Houses of Parliament, are raised and continued for the defence of the true Protestant Religion, &c. and that they will assist those forces against the forces raised by the King. And I beseech you, why may not Papists, Anabaptists and Brownists, both beleieve this in their consciences, and yeeld this assistance, as well, or better then any true hearted Protestant, that loves the true Reformed Protestant Religion established, And it must needs be thought very fit, that such a sacred vow and covenant be made and taken by us true hearted Subjects and lovers of the true Protestant Religion, for the defence of our Religion and Liberties, which such professed enemies to our Religion and Liberties, may

with more safety of conscience make or take then we.

But not to dwell any longer upon the Introduction. In the last place it will not be amisse to observe, under what names this new Oath is recommended unto us: *viz.* Under the names of a sacred vow and covenant. I doe not use to boggle at names; but these are the times of Jealousies and Feares, and it cannot be expected but some will be fearefull and jealous of the Declarations and Actions of the Lords and Commons now assembled in Parliament, as well as they have beene, and still are of others; and therefore, I trust, 'tis a pardonable sinne, (if any) to say, I like this Oath somewhat the worse for its appearing to us, under that borrowed name of sacred vow and covenant, and not under 'its owne proper name, An Oath. I ever suspected the shifting of Names; and I would faine know some reason (if it might be imparted to such a one as I am) why it should not (being an attestation, or calling God to witnesse for the confirmation of what is asserted or promised, which is as full, compleat, and formall an Oath, as can be taken) be tendred unto us under the name of an Oath, rather then under the name of a sacred vow and covenant? Is it to facilitate the taking of it? there being many thousands of the ordinary sort of people, that feare the taking of an Oath, especially a solemne, publike Oath, having beene often taught the perill of it; who will never startle at the making a vow or covenant being lesse instructed, if not altogether ignorant of the nature of it. Or are not these borrowed names used, to hold the People more fully and firmly to this Oath, when 'tis once taken? So that, if the people after this Oath taken, should begin to doubt, whether it be not flatly contrary to their Oath of Allegiance, to their Oath of Supremacy, and to their late Protestation, (as without doubt it is) and thereupon either thinke this Oath absolutely void, or question whether this or the former Oathes were the more obliging, it would be an advantage which the Time-serving Preachers would not let slip, to tell the people, That this their last Oath is to be held to, before all their former; because it is not only an Oath, as they were, but also a sacred vow and covenant, I am sure lesse advantages have beene made use of by those new Teachers. But no more of the Name, wishing from my soule that it had never beene named amongst Christians.

Come we to the Oath it selfe. Concerning which, for the satisfying of my owne conscience, and the consciences of as many as  
you

you shall please to acquaint therewith, I desire that one rule for the right taking of an Oath may be thoroughly considered, and each part of this present Oath, examined according to that Rule: The Rule is that of Gods own prescribing, by his Prophet *Jeremiah*, 4. 2. *Thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth, in Truth, in Judgement, and in Righteousnesse*: that is, in few words: Thou shalt sweare to nothing, calling God, who liveth for ever, as a witnesse thereunto, but what is True, and what thou knowest and art sure of, and what is just and righteous. These three qualifications ought to be the boundaries and limits of every Oath; and he sinneth highly against the expresse Command of God, and so hazards his Soule in a most perillous manner, that faileth in any one of these. According unto these then, let us in the Name of God examine the severall parts of this new Oath.

First every man that taketh this Oath is required to declare, and that in reverence and humility to the Divine Majesty, and (as 'tis in the close of the Oath) in the presence of Almighty God, the searcher of all hearts, as he will answer at the great day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, this hearty sorrow for his owne sinnes, and the sinnes of this Nation, &c. and that his true intention is by Gods grace to endeavour the amendment of his owne wayes. Concerning which I propound these two *Queres*.

1. *Quer.* How thousands and ten thousands in this Nation can swear this in Truth, when as, poore soules, if all should take this Oath that are by this Ordinance required, 'tis to be feared there would be no fewer, whose very hearts would give their mouthes the lie, and whose very immediat actions would testify against them to the contrary: for, alas, how few are there who attaine to that height of grace and goodnes, as to be heartily sorry either for their owne sinnes or the sinnes of the Nation? Oh that there were such an heart in them (said God once of Israell, when they all promised that they would heare whatsoever God speake to Moses and doe it) that they would feare me, and keepe all my commandements alwayes that it might be well with them, and with their childreu for ever: and, oh, that there were now such an heart in us all of this Nation, will all good men wish, that we would all in earnest be heartily sorry for our owne sinnes, and the sinnes of this Nation; and that we did really intend an amendment of our owne wayes: for then to be sure, it

would be well with us, and with our children after us. But for so many thousands, nay, the most of us, to declare, and sweare this in the presence of Almighty God, the searcher of all hearts, when both God that searcheth our hearts, and our owne hearts themselves know, that it is not so: what will this doe, but infinitely adde to our sinnes, and provoke God to adde to our calamities and judgements both personall and Nationall? How many towle, abominable, crying sinnes are there, whereof you and I know multitudes, (I would we could exempt the Imposers of this new Oath) to be deeply guilty, which the most of them will not acknowledge to be sins, but justify themselves in them, so farre as they are from being heartily sorry for them, or intending any amendment of them. As for instance, uncharitablenes, lying, slander, rapine, oppression, disobedience, bloodshed, and rebellion; and yet they that are most conscious of such crimes, will ('tis likely) with the first declare or sweare in the presence of Almighty God, and as they will answer it at the great day, &c. that they are heartily sorry for their owne sinnes, &c. and intend amendment. Thus whilst we professe to enter into a sacred covenant, and by that to bind our selves to bewaile and forsake our sinnes, (the acknowledged causes of our present calamities and judgements) we doe but mocke God, speaking words, and swearing falsely in making a covenant, which makes our judgements to grow the more, springing up like hemlocke in furrowes of the field, *Hosea* 10. 4. Let us then pray, and that earnestly, that God would be pleased, according to his promise, *Jerem.* 31. to make a new covenant with us, and to put his law in our inward parts, and write it in our hearts, or (as the Prophet *Ezekiell* expresseth that covenant, *Ezek.* 11. 19, 20.) that he would give us one heart, and put a new spirit within us, and take the stony heart out of our flesh, and give us an heart of flesh, that we may walke in his statutes, &c. But let us take heed how we sweare or declare in the presence of God, that our stony heart is taken from us, and that an heart of flesh, that is, a softened, mollified, penitent heart is given us, when our hearts assure us, that there is no such worke wrought in us; as also that we intend an amendment of our wayes for the future, when we intend nothing lesse.

2. *Quer.* What sinnes are to be accounted the sinnes of the Nation? that lo we may sweare in judgement, knowing what we sweare. And

And to this purpose it may be questioned, whether the late superstitious practises and innovations, against which there have beene so many Declamations, are to be reputed finnes of this Nation? and how many are or will be heartily sorry for them, though they have beene no little cause of our present sorrowes? As also, whether Anabaptistickall, Brownistickall, and other Separatistickall practises, and positions, connived at, if not countenanced, by those who ought to suppress and punish the Authors and Fautors thereof, and to be esteemed finnes of the Nation: And how many will declare their sorrow for them, though our present sorrowes are fomented, and continued by them? as further, whether plundering, robbing, and spoiling; whether speaking evill of Dignities, and slandering both the foot-steps and persons of the Lords Anointed; whether false swearing and perjury, whereof our Oathes of Allegiance, Supremacie, and late Protestation are pregnant witnessses, are to be numbred amongst the finnes of this Nation? and how many will declare their hearty sorrow for them, though like to increase our sorrowes to our being overwhelmed by them? Or whether onely those finnes not long since Declared by publike Order of the Lords and Commons, *Feb. 15. 1643* and appointed to be read in all Churches and Chappels, &c. be the finnes of this Nation? viz. the high contempt of Gods holy Ordinances, &c. Multitudes of oathes, and blasphemies, &c. envy, contentions, and unnaturall divisions, oppression, fraud, and violence, as also whether the blood shed in the daies of Queene *Mary*, and Idolatry then and since, are to be adjudged the finnes of this Nation, and our sorrowes to be terminated in lamenting them? This I humbly conceive were fit to be declared before wee sweare or declare in the presence of God, and as we will answer at the great day, &c. that we are heartily sorry for the finnes of this Nation. What we doe declare our hearty sorrow for in private, every mans owne conscience regulates him in: but when we make a publike solemn declaration of our sorrow for the whole Nations finnes, and enter into a sacred covenant with God, not to commit the like finnes againe, it is but reason, that as many finnes of the Nation as can be thought on, at least the most notorious, should be publicly named; that so the people may know what finnes in speciall they professe themselves sorry for, and promise amendment of; This hath beene observed in making covenants, which were sacred indeed, concerning



Nationall finnes: as in that covenant which *Josua* called upon the people to make, *Josb.* 24. that appointed by *Asa.* 2. *Chr.* 15. that appointed by *Josiah.* 2. *Chr.* 34. and that appointed by *Exra.* *Exr.* 10. In all which covenants you shall finde the principall Nationall sins, of which, they declared their detestation, and promised amendment, particularly Named. But indeed every one of those covenants were entred into by the command and authority of the supream Governour; and it is not to be found in sacred Writ, where ever there was any sacred Nationall Covenant enjoyned by any, save by the King, or supreme of that Nation; or by the expresse authority derived from Him. But no more of this first part of the Covenant, it being as I verily beleieve, the least part intended by the Contrivers of it; only it is set in the first place, that looking upon that, our eyes may be so dazzled with the glorious specious religiousnesse of it, as not to be able to discover the foule, abominable iniquity of the rest.

The second thing required in this oath, is, That we sweare or declare in the presence of Almighty God, that we doe abhorre and detest the said wicked and treacherous designe lately discovered, and that we never gave, nor will give our assent to the execution thereof, but will according to our power and vocations oppose and resist the same; and all other of the like nature: concerning which, I make these foure Quæres.

1. *Quæ.* How is it possible for the most of men to sweare this in judgement, according to the second necessary condition of a lawfull oath, seeing 'tis no where declared by the Lords and Commons, what that wicked and treacherous designe was, further then in the generall (and generalls are no sufficient ground for the abjuring any particular) only *Mr. Pym* hath collected some particulars of it in his speech before mentioned: but how shall thousands reach that collection? And when they have it, what proofes and testimonies doth he bring to convince any reasonable man of the undoubted truth of what he saith? It seemes by that very speech, that himselfe and the rest of the House of Commons, who know most of it, do not know it throughly, or at least doubt whether they doe or not, for that pardon is offered by him in their names to any (except those who are taken or fled) that shall within 15. dayes discover what he knowes of this conspiracy. And will any man that knowes what God is, call him to witnesse, that he abhorres and detests that which he



he doth not certainly know. 'Tis to be feared God will abhor that man as an extreme vain foolish man, that shall so vainly and foolishly prophane his great name; and such a man may easily be induced to sweare an abhorrement and detestation of what God most likes and loves, he knowing as little of that, as of this.

But suppose the designe be sufficiently declared, though not so fully as some desire it might be; yet Mr. *Pym* himselfe hath withall declared that of it in his fore cited speech, that would move any loyall Subject to make a second Quære.

2. *Quer.* Whether any such can sweare justly and righteously, that the designe discovered is such a wicked and treacherous designe as ought to be abhorred & detested by him, for besides the intentions or aimes of it (whereof you heard in the introduction) he tells us, that for the principles of it, it did rise from the ashes of another designe that failed, namely, that mutinous Petition for Peace (as he is pleased to honour it by his quiet Epithite) contrived in the City, and how that was to be abhorred and detested, let every true lover of peace judge: Then for the steps of it, he assureth us, that it came to that high step at the last, how they might procure power and countenance to the action by authority from His Majestie in the way of Commission, and this, saith he afterwards, they did procure, and this doth not render it very horrible and detestable, unlesse to those that abhor to obey any Commission that His Majesty grants: So for the Actors or Agents in it, he is pleased to cloud some in their generall qualifications or relations, and some few he cloaths with their owne names. In the generall he tells us, that some Members of the City had a hand in this designe, whereof there were divers (they are his words) and some Members of both Houses, and of the Lords House (and if Mr. *Waller* were to be credited) of the ablest, of the best, and of the greatest; in particular, he names two Gentlemen, Mr. *Waller*, (as though Mr. *Waller* an eminent Parliament man were not worrhy to be reckoned amongst the Parliament Members) and his brother in law Mr. *Tomkins*, (I wonder he forgot Mrs. *Tomkins*, who was also apprehended and committed; but chaste man he mindes not women, especially other mens wives) and the Lord *Faulkland* one of the Secretaries of State. And how the designe should deserve to be abhorred and detested from such mens being the prime actors in it, is beyond my skill: I should rather thinke the better, then the worse of

a designe for such actors sake : besides (because Mr *Pym* should have lost his old wont, if he had made any Speech (especially to the Citizens) without throwing some dirt in the Kings face) we are further let know from the same mouth, that this matter was prosecuted in part, and agitated and promoted by those which were sent from His Majesty, and seemed to be Messengers of Peace; and (for feare any should thinke he aimed onely at the Kings Messengers, and not at the King Himselfe) in the same breath he falls foule and heavy (like himself) upon the Kings gracious Message of Peace, and would faine insinuate that those Messages sent by His Majesty were but to amuse the people with pretences of peace, whilst this villanous project was a working, and so the King is made one and (perhaps Mr. *Pym* will allow Him in this so much of His royall Title) the chiefe of this conspiracy, and what true hearted Subject will be easily induced to say, much lesse to swear, that he abhorres and detests as wicked and treacherous that design, whereof his Sovereigne is not only thoroughly informed, but is (with reverence to His Sacred Majestie be those termes used) the chiefe Complotter and Abettor?

3. *Quer.* Whether the swearing that I never gave my assent to that designe, be not to all those that had any finger therein (and they are voiced to be many thousands) as fore an oath, and as much betraying either of their soules to the hazard of hell, or of their bodies and estates to the probability of utter ruine, as ever the oath *ex officio* was, so much cryed out upon in the world? This I am sure of, upon the discoverie of all the wicked, treacherous, horrid, detestable designs that have beene in this Kingdome since the Reformation, whether Powder-treason, or what other soever, there was never the like course of soul-cruelty taken for the insnaring of so many soules: the Lord in His mercy looke upon them, and deliver them.

4. *Quer.* Whether the adding of these words, Nor will give my assent to the execution thereof, but will according to my power and vocation oppose and resist the same, and all other of the like nature, &c. doe not argue strongly that the designe was of that nature, that if it should appear in its owne colours, it would appear so faire, that multitudes would yet assent to the putting it into execution? and therefore, is not so horrid and detestable as some would make us believe; for certainly if it were so, the whole Kingdome need not to be sworne never to assent to the execution of it after 'tis once discovered,

wered, but to their power to oppose and resist the same, and altho' of the like nature, every man would of his own accord for himselfe against it with all his might and power.

The third thing tendred in this Oath is, That in case any other designe shall hereafter come to our knowledge, we will make such timely discovery as we shall conceive may best conduce to the preventing thereof, Concerning which, I shall only state these two questions, 1. What is to be accounted for a designe. 2. Whether every man that takes this Oath, be not truly bound to make such timely discovery of whatsoever he knows plotted, projected, contrived or purposed to the prejudice either of the King, Church, or State, or any Member thereof, that it may be prevented? Or whether the obligation of this Oath be not restrained onely to the discovery of designes against the two Houses of Parliament, and especially against those Members of each House against whom the late discovered designe is said to be intended. And I would you durst resolve me freely and fully whether this particular Oath be not such a designe, as every man that knowes of the contriving thereof be not bound in conscience to discover what he can of it, to the preventing of the ruining of so many thousand poore souls as are like to be hazarded thereby.

But to come to the main thing aimed at in the imposing this Oath, those indeed unto which all the preceding parts of the Oath, are but a preparative, and have been themselves prepared in a readinesse, and resolved upon by some to be gotten confirmed by an Oath, long before the forenamed wicked and treacherous designe now made, so advantageous to set of this Oath withall, was ever heard of, inasmuch that many sober judicious men do verily suspect, that rather that designe is declared to be so wicked, treacherous, horrid and detestable, to draw on the taking the following part of this Oath, then that any part of this Oath, much lesse the whole Oath it selfe, was resolved upon, as occasioned by the wickednesse, treachery, horridnesse, and detestableness of that designe, as some would perswade us.

We are required in the fourth place to swear or declare in the presence of Almighty God, That we doe in our consciences believe, that the Forces raysed by the two Houses of Parliament, are raised and continued for their just defence, and for the defence of the true Protestant Religion, and Liberties of the Subject, against the Forces raysed by the King. Where I intreat satisfaction in these *Quæres*.

1. *Quære*. Why is the defence of the King, here left quite out, when as it hath bin so often professed and declared, by the Lords and Commons, in their severall Declarations & Ordinances, that they raysed their Forces

for his defence in the first place? It seems they are afraid to sweare that, though they have often and often declared it: and why then should we make their declarations so firme a ground of our faith, as thereupon to sweare that we do in our consciences believe, that the Forces raysed by them, were raised and are continued for such and such ends: when they themselves will not sweare that they were raised for that end; which they have so many times declared?

2. *Quer.* How dare any man sweare or declare in the presence of Almighty God, &c. that he doth in his conscience believe, that the Forces raysed by the two Houses of Parliament, are raysed and continued for their just defence, when the King hath made them so many gracious overtures of peace, and they have refused them, as appears by sundry Messages and Declarations, with the Answers and Replies, that have passed betwixt them: nay, when the King hath wooed and intreated them, with such sweetnesses of temper, and lownes of condescension, as never any Prince used towards Subjects, that they would both name the persons, and appoint the place for a Treaty, betwixt him and them, for settling the peace of the Kingdom, & ending & quieting all differences between them: yet still his offers have bin utterly rejected, unlesse he would first take downe his Standard, & call in what Proclamations & Declarations he had made against some of the Members of both Houses, & their proceedings (both which His Majesty yeelded to do, so that they would revoke their Declarations against all persons that assisted him) as also leave his Forces, & withdraw his protection both from such persons, as were by both Houses voted Delinquents, and from all such as should afterwards be so voted, as you may see more at large in His Majesties gracious Message to both Houses of Parliament, sent from *Nottingham*, August 25. 1642. The Answer of the Lords & Commons to that Message. His Majesties reply to that answer. Their answer and their Declaration to that reply, and the former Message. And can it be beleaved that the defensive part of this Warre (be it just or unjust) was on their side, when the King was thus the offerer and suer for peace, and they the refusers, requiring Him to yeeld to those things, which could not possibly stand with His owne Honour and Safety. or with the safety of those that are His most faithfull and loyal Subjects, called to His assistance by His Summons, and their Allegiance. Or can that be believed to be a defensive War, much lesse a War for a just defence, when many of the forces raised by them, were raised, and the Kings Goods, Armes, Townes, Shipping, and whole *Militia* were taken from Him, and made use of, and held against him, before any the least warlike

warlike offence was offered them by any Forces raised by the Kings hath  
 beene sufficiently cleared: both by His Majesties Declarations, and upon  
 our sad & chargeable experience. Beside, we were told from severall Pul-  
 pits, about the time of the first Propositions for Horse, Plate, or money, June  
 10. 1642. and often times since, that the Forces then in raising, and since  
 raised by the Parliament, were to fetch the King from His evill Councel-  
 lours, and to remove them from Him; and this was afterwards againe pro-  
 mised to have beene done within such and such a time, if we would contri-  
 bute but the other odde forty or fifty thousand pounds; and I assure you  
 we beleevied it then, or else we had not parted with our moneys so freely.  
 And therefore I cannot but wonder that we, who at the first raising of  
 Forces by the Parliament, and some good time since, did verily believe,  
 that those forces were raised to catch away the King from His evill Coun-  
 cellours, & to take away, or drive away his evill Councillors from him, pro-  
 mising our selves such hopes of accomplishing our desires with so much  
 ease & speed, should now sweare that we do in our consciences believe, that  
 the same forces were raised for the just defence of the Parliaments, as though  
 the King had bin then fetching them from their evill Councillors, or their  
 evill Councillors from them. If only feares & jealousies of the Kings inten-  
 tion to raise & levy warre against His Parliament were a just cause or  
 ground for his Parliament to levy forces against him, (which to grant would  
 be of most dangerous consequence both to King & Kingdome) perhaps  
 some might thinke that the present Parliament now assembled, did feare, &  
 were jealous of some such thing, & so had cause to provide such a defence  
 but how can we be perswaded in our consciences that those feares and  
 jealousies were just, when upon the Kings first knowing that such feares  
 & jealousies did possesse them, he did not only declare the contrary, but did  
 solemnely disavow all such intentions, professing before God & the World  
 that he alwayes had, & then did abhorre all such designs? And for the fur-  
 ther clearing of his intentions in that particular, He desired all his Nobility  
 & Councell, then attending Him, to witnesse with Him, whether they did  
 see any colour of preparations or Councells, that might reasonably beget a  
 believe of any such designe, & whether they were not fully perswaded to  
 the contrary; &c. whereupon the Nobility & Councell then present at  
 Yorke, being in number above forty, made a Declaration & Profession in  
 these words: *We whose names are underwritten, in obedience to His Maje-  
 sties desire, and out of the duty which we owe to His Majesties Honour, and  
 to truth, being here upon the place, & witnesses of His Majesties frequent and  
 earnest Declarations & Professions of his abhorring all designs of making warre  
 upon his Parliament, and not seeing any colour of preparations or counsells,*



that might reasonably bring any beliefe of any such designe. Do profess before God, & testify to all the world, that we are fully perswaded, that His Majesty hath no such intention, but that all His induvours tend to the firm and constant settlement of the true Protestant Religion, the just priviledges of Parliament, the liberty of the Subject, the Law, Peace, & Prosperity of this Kingdome. This solemn Profession was made by the King, & attested by His Nobility & Councell, June 15. 1642. which was five dayes after that, the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament had made certaine propositions and orders for the bringing in of Money, Plate, or Horse, &c. for the maintaining an Army for their defence. So that (as I said before) if feares and jealousies of the Kings intentions of raising and leavying War against His Parliament, were a just cause or ground for his Parliament actually to raise or leavy Forces against him; & if we could also in our consciences believe, that such feares and jealousies did really and truly possesse both Houses; yet when it appears by such evidence (as greater and better could not be given) that those feares and jealousies were not just: it is strange to thinke what conscience or faith (I might adde what hope or charity) that man hath; that can answer or declare in the presence of Almighty God, that he believeth in his conscience that the forces raised by the Parliament upon that unjust ground or cause, were raised for their just defence.

*Ques.* How can any man sweare in Judgement & in Truth, that he doth in his conscience believe, that the Forces raised by the two Houses of Parliament, were raised, & continued for the defence of the true Protestant Religion: when as first, it by the true Protestant Religion he meant that Protestant Religion which is now established (so far as ought can be said to be established) in the Church of England (as that must be meant, or otherwise we know not what the true Protestant Religion is, & so cannot take this Oath in Judgement) it hath been found by lamentable experience, that the true Protestant Religion hath been more invaded, impugned and blasphemed by the forces raised by the two Houses of Parliament, and their assistants and adherers, in those parts where they have had the power, then ever it was since Queene *Maries* daies, witnesse the many uncivill, unhumane, unchristian attempts, assaults and outrages that have been committed by Anabaptists, Brownists, and other Sectaries upon our established worship & service of God, upon Gods holy Ordinances, & upon those sacred places wherein all these were wont to meet, & present themselves to us in such beauty & excellency to our unspeakable benefit & comfort. I must not forget, how the most pious, painfull, & orthodoxall Protestant Divines (they



(they, that in former times, when the Protestant Religion suffered most by another faction, but the heat and burden of the opposition, & stood in the gap against Arminianisme, and other innovations) have bene since the raising of forces by the Parliament, and by the power thereof, abused, imprisoned, and cruelly handled, when others that then deserted their stations, have been magnified and extolled; nay, when drunken, debauched, innovating drones, that have contributed towards the maintenance of the Parliaments forces, have been connived at and favoured, and if by chance apprehended, speedily dismissed, and set at liberty. He must have a strong faith, and a stretching conscience, that can beleve in his conscience, that these are markes or signes of defending the true Protestant Religion. If this be their defending of it, God send us our old Defender thereof once againe reestablished in His Throne, and let these new defenders defend themselves. Secondly, the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament did, no longer since then in March last, declare, and publish to the world in that Ordinance of theirs, for the speedy raising and leavying of money for the maintenance of the Army raised by the Parliament, that the only Causes for which they had raised, and did then continue an Army and Forces, were, first, for the necessary defence of themselves (which may be somewhat more easily beleaved then for their just defence. Secondly, for the necessary defence of this Kingdome from foreign raigne invasions, a defence not now mentioned. And thirdly, for the bringing of notorious offenders to condigne punishment, a thing also (as was before hinted) altogether forgotten in this new oath. And if the Lords and Commons themselves have so lately declared and acknowledged, that these were the only causes, for which they raised, and then continued their army and forces, they have no cause to take offence at any that shall not believe, that the same forces were raised and continued, for the defence of the true Protestant Religion. I praise God I have no such Moon faith, to

4. *Quær.* How can any man swear in truth, That he doth in his conscience believe, that the forces raised by the two Houses are raised and continued for the defence of the liberties of the Subject, when by the raising and continuing of these Forces, first, the liberty of enjoyning their owne goods, chattells, or lands. Secondly, the liberty of their trading and trafficking. Thirdly, the liberty of their persons. Fourthly the liberty of their consciences towards God, their King, and their fellow-brethren. Fifthly, the liberty of their very lives, is dayly and hourly either taken or endeavoured to be taken from the best of Subjects, & all these contrary to the liberty of the established known Laws of this Land. Indeed, to Bankrupts &

Spendthrifts

that might reasonably beget the helpe of any such designe. Do professe before God & the world, that we are fully perswaded that His Majesty hath no such intention, but that all His endeavours tend to the firm and constant settlement of the true Protestant Religion, the just priviledges of Parliament, the liberty of the Subject, the Law, Peace, & Prosperity of this Kingdome. This solemn Profession was made by the King, & attested by His Nobility & Councell, June 15. 1642. which was five dayes after that the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament had made certaine propositions and orders for the bringing in of Money, Plate, or Horse, &c. for the maintaining an Army for their defence. So that (as I said before) if feares and jealousies of the Kings intentions of raising and leaving War against His Parliament, were a just cause or ground for his Parliament actually to raise or leave Forces against him; & if we could also in our consciences believe, that such feares and jealousies did really and truly possesse both Houses; yet when it appeares by such evidence (as greater and better could not be given) that those feares and jealousies were not just; it is strange to thinke what conscience or faith, (I might adde what hope or charity) that man hath, that can answer or declare in the presence of Almighty God, that he believeth in his conscience that the forces raised by the Parliament upon that unjust ground or cause, were raised for their just defence.

3. *Quer.* How can any man sweare in Judgement & in Truth, that he doth in his conscience believe, that the Forces raised by the two Houses of Parliament, were raised, & continued for the defence of the true Protestant Religion; when as first, if by the true Protestant Religion he meant that Protestant Religion which is now established (so far as ought can be said to be established) in the Church of England (as that must be meant, or otherwise we know not what the true Protestant Religion is, & so cannot take this Oath in Judgement) it hath been found by lamentable experience, that the true Protestant Religion hath been more invaded, impugned and blasphemed by the forces raised by the two Houses of Parliament, and their assistants and adherents, in those parts where they have had the power, then ever it was since Queene *Maries* daies, witnesseth the many uncivill, unhumane, unchristian attempts, assaults and outrages that have been committed by Anabaptists, Brownists, and other Sectaries upon our established worship & service of God, upon Gods holy Ordinances, & upon those sacred places wherein all those were wont to meet, & present themselves to us in such beauty & excellency to our unspeakable benefit & comfort. I must not forget, how the most pious, painfull, & orthodoxall Protestant Divines (they

(they that in former times, when the Protestant Religion suffered most by another faction, but the heat and burden of the opposition, & stood in the gap against Arminianisme, and other innovations) have bene since the raising of forces by the Parliament, and by the power thereof, abused, imprisoned, and cruelly handled, when others that then deserted their stations, have been magnified and extolled; nay, when drunken, debauched, innovating drones, that have contributed towards the maintenance of the Parliaments forces, have been connived at and favoured, and if by chance apprehended, speedily dismissed, and set at liberty. He must have a strong faith, and a stretching conscience, that can believe in his conscience, that these are markes or signes of defending the true Protestant Religion. If this be their defending of it, God send us our old Defender thereof once againe reestablished in His Throne, and let these new defenders defend themselves. Secondly, the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament did, no longer since then in March last, declare, and publish to the world in that Ordinance of theirs, for the speedy raising and leaving of money for the maintenance of the Army raised by the Parliament, that the only Causes for which they had raised, and did then continue an Army and Forces, were, first, for the necessary defence of themselves (which may be somewhat more easily beleev'd then for their just defence. Secondly, for the necessary defence of this Kingdome from forraigne invasions, a defence not now mentioned. And thirdly, for the bringing of notorious offenders to condigne punishment, a thing also (as was before hinted) altogether forgotten in this new oath. And if the Lords and Commons themselves have so lately declared and acknowledged, that these were the only causes, for which they raised, and then continued their army and forces, they have no cause to take offence at any that shall not believe, that the same forces were raised and continued, for the defence of the true Protestant Religion. I praise God I have no such Moon, faith, 10.

4. *Quer.* How can any man swear in truth, That he doth in his conscience believe, that the forces raised by the two Houses are raised and continued for the defence of the liberties of the Subject, when by the raising and continuing of these Forces, first, the liberty of enjoyning their owne goods, chattells, or lands. Secondly, the liberty of their trading and trafficking. Thirdly, the liberty of their persons. Fourthly the liberty of their consciences towards God, their King, and their fellow-brethren. Fifthly, the liberty of their very lives, is dayly and hourly either taken or endeavoured to be taken from the best of Subjects, & all these contrary to the Liberty of the established known Laws of this Land. Indeed, to Bankrupts & Spendthrifts

Spendthrifts, to Rogues, Theeves, Murderers, and such like, there is such politick liberty of spoyling, robbing, plundering, and killing yeelded, to Anabaptists, Brownists, and other Sectaries, such Ecclesiasticall liberty of Conventicle, prating and printing permitted, and to all sorts of factious, seditious, rebellious Miscreants, such liberty of lying, rayling and blaspheming indulged, as the like was never heard of, much lesse tollerated and countenanced in any Christian Commonwealth. And though we had such faith as that we could beleve that the forces raised by the two Houses of Parliament were raised for the defence of the liberties of the Subject, yet when we poore oppressed, spoyled, and almost ruined Subjects, see, feelee, and complaine, that the fruits and effects thereof are so destructively contrary thereunto; we cannot possibly beleve, that they are still continued for the defence of our liberties; and therefore it is but just to desire, that they, and only they be required to swear they doe beleve this, who have hitherto enjoyed their liberties.

*Quæ.* How can any man sweare in Judgement and Truth, that he doth in his conscience beleve, that the forces raised by the two Houses, &c. were raised, & are continued for the just defence of these three things named in this oath, when that which should justify the defence of them, or any of them (if ought could possibly justify it in those wayes practised by them) I mean the knowne established Law of this Land, is not onely violated and justled out of place and power, but also quite left out of all defence and protection; now they come to sweare or declare before the Lord, that those things are, which they intend to defend. What may bee the reason thinke you, why in former Declarations and Ordinances of the Lords and Commons, it hath beene often professed, that one maine end of their raising forces was for the defence of the Lawes of this Land, and yet now in this new oath, when they reckon up the maine ends of raising and continuing the very same forces, the Lawes of the Land are not once named. Certainly we might as safely sweare, that we doe in our consciences believe, that the sayd forces were raysed, and are continued for the defence of the Lawes of the Land, (notwithstanding that the whole Land knowes that by those forces, the Lawes of the Land have beene and are quite silenced and null'd) as we can sweare that we doe in our consciences believe, that they were raysed and are continued for the just defence of the Parliament, and are for the defence of the true Protestant Religion, and liberties of the Subject. Only the Lawes of the Land are likely to bring in such an heavy accusation and sore judgement against those that have taken up Armes in this cause on the Parliament side, notwithstanding

withstanding all the specious pretences of false seeming ends, and are so Diametrically, or point blanke to all Arbitrary power, that the beleevving that those forces raised by the Parliament, were raised and are continued for the defence of those Lawes might well be spared.

6<sup>th</sup> *Quær.* How can any man sweare either in Judgement, or in Righteousnesse, or in Truth, That he doth in his conscience beleieve that the forces raised by the two Houses, &c. were raised, and are continued for their own just defence; and for the defence of the true Protestant Religion, and liberties of the Subject, against the Forces raised by the King; when the King hath not onely often and often professed and declared, but at sundry times most solemnely and deeply vowed, protested and sworne ( His Nobility and Councell, in number above forty, and in estate, honour, and worth not to be parallell'd throughout the Kingdom, attesting and professing the same, as you heard before ) that he ever intended the safety and preservation of all three, and when he did raise any forces, that he raised them to make good those intentions, and (and to Gods glory, His Majesties honour, and his Subjects comfort and benefit, be it published) hath to his utmost made them all good, in all places where his forces have been quartered since the first raising them to this present, as both his Armies, and many thousands more are ready to depose it if that would satisfie For my part, I ascribe so much to the word of a King, and in particular to the word of pious, Religious King CHARLES, that what he declares in point of Truth, especiall concerning his Royall Intentions, I thinke my selfe bound in Conscience to believe, before all the Declarations of all others in the world: how much more, when so pious and religious a King as he is, hath so often vowed and sworne such and such things, ought all His Subjects (especially having all sworne to maintaine His Honour against all that shall do ought to the prejudice thereof ) so to honour Him, as to credit and beleve His Vow and Oath, before the declaration of a few of His Subjects, who have strained (to say the least, and with the most modesty and reverence) their former oathes made to their Sovereigne, both by raising forces against Him, and by entering into this present Vow and Covenant against Him, and the forces raised by Him, as will be further demonstrated by and by. It is well knowne to all knowing and understanding men, that a King is not capable of having those by aimes, and ends in making or taking an Oath, or of those many temptations of breaking or violating an Oath when it is made or taken, that some of His Subjects may have. And though it should be granted by all (as we know it is not) that the Lords & Commons remaining in the two Houses of Parliament, be their

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representative Body of the Kingdome, to doe for them, as well as to consulte; yet certainly no sober man will grant that every body in the Kingdome is bound to act and doe whatsoever they enjoyne, be it good or evill, much lesse that they ought to swear, that they doe in their consciences beleve whatsoever they do declare or swear; and although it were acknowledged that they are the representative Body of the Kingdome, and so representative, that the whole Kingdom were bound, either to doe, or suffer for not doing, whatsoever they enjoyne (as 'tis knowne we are not unless our Head did consent, and joyne with them) yet still I hope, none thinke them the representative Soule of the Kingdome; so that whatsoever they believe, or swear they believe, our souls are bound to believe the same. Nay further, had the Lords and Commons sworne expressly and punctually, that the forces raised by the two Houses, &c. were raised and continued for those three forementioned ends, yet still for the reasons before alledged, I cannot see why we should swear that we doe believe the same. But when the Lords and Commons themselves, that were the raisers of those forces, swear only, that they doe in their consciences believe that those forces were raised, and are continued for those ends (as being it seems fully perswaded so, either by the close Committee, or by some others that knew the certainty thereof.) One would thinke it were an act of charity and faith sufficient, for others to be their compurgators so far, as to swear that they doe believe that those Lords and Commons doe believe so; and that it is too great a presumption, to swear that they do in their consciences beleve that it was, and is so indeed. Beleeve mee in any other case, if any other persons, whose truth and integrity is best knowne to us, had acknowledged that they themselves had done this or that, and being suspected, that they had done it for some evill intent or purpose, should swear only that they doe in their consciences beleve, that they did it for such, or such an end, most fair and just, their very swearing so would cause more suspicion of them, then if they had held their peace, and said nothing.

7. *Quer.* How dare any man swear or declare in the presence of Almighty God, &c. that he doth in his conscience believe, that the forces raised by the two Houses of Parliament, are raised & continued for their just defence, and for the defence of the true Protestant Religion, and liberties of the Subject, against the forces raised by the King; when so to swear or declare, is to swear and declare in Gods presence that he doth in his conscience beleve, that the Forces raised by the King are raised and continued for the subversion and ruine, at least for the extreame damage and detriment of all the same things? And what a hard case is it, that



that a man must be put to such an Oath, as to sweare not only that he doth believe well of both Houses of Parliament, but also that he doth believe to much evill of a good King? as, were He the worst of Kings, worse could not be thought of Him, all things considered. Why perhaps there may be some of so loyall and just thoughts towards their Sovereigne, and yet withall of so charitable and reverentiall thoughts towards both Houses of Parliament as to think that the forces on each part were raised & continued for the same ends, and they (those three mentioned) only most unhappily differed in the means and waies of accomplishing of those ends. And what shall these poore soules do, when they cannot satisfie the Parliament by taking this oath, but they must thereby abandon all loyall thoughts of their King? Lord be thou their Directour.

It followeth in the Oath, as an inference inforced from the last thing believed and sworne, *I do here in the presence of Almighty God declare, vow, and covenant, that I will according to my power and vocation assist the forces raised and continued by both Houses of Parliament against the Forces raised by the King, without their consent.* Concerning which part of the Oath, that I may still keepe within the prescribed bounds of a lawfull Oath, I desire these *Quarries* may be cleared.

1. *Quar.* What is here meant by Vocation, that so we may swear in judgement knowing what we sweare? whether are we to understand by Vocation, that ordinary course of life, or externall profession, whereunto God doth ordinarily call men, & where he doth externally place them? as when some are called to be Pastors & Teachers in the Church, others to be fed and taught; some are called to be Masters, others to be Servants; some are called to be Husbandmen, others are called to be Tradesmen, &c. or whether by Vocation here, may not be understood some extraordinary calling by secret inspiration, divine revelation, or the like; as certainly some such calling must be presupposed, or else I cannot see what warrant they can pretend for the assisting any Forces against their Sovereigne. This *Query* I could not baulk, because the using of this expression, *According to my Vocation*, is not any where to be found, that I know of any Oath that hath beene taken in this Nation, though the other limitation, *According to my power*, hath beene usuall in most or all our promissorie Oathes: which makes me to think that some Divine or other was the framer and contriver of this new Oath; or at least had a great hand in it (howsoever it was pretended to have beene suddainly framed by some Members of the House of Commons upon the discovery of the great designe) and being called to that calling, his conscience minded him somewhat of the unlawfullnesse  
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and unfeemeliſſe for a Miniſter of the Goſpell of peace to be an aſſiſtant in war, eſpecially in ſuch a war; or elſe rather he thought, that the adding of this limitation, *According to my Vocation*, would excuſe him both from contributing much mony to the war, as alſo from hazarding his owne perſon in it (as ſome of their furious brethren to their ſhame and confuſion have done) ſo that he did but in his preaching, and by his praying, thoſe two glorious, but now profaned and blaſphemed Ordinances, intice and ſtirre up others thereunto: But then I cannot but ſtill wonder why the Lords ſhould each of them ſweare, *According to my Vocation, &c.* I believe if one ſhould aſke any of their Lordſhips what Vocation he is of, he would not take it well; though for the Houſe of Commons, we know divers of the are of ſeverall *Vocations*; & ſo this limitation might become them well enough.

2. *Quer.* How any man that profeſſeth himſelf to be either of the ſame judgement with the Church of England, and with the glorious Martyrs, and renowned Divines, and other learned Worthies, that have ſince the Reformation lived in this Church, or of the ſame judgement with any other of the Reformed Churches, and the moſt renowned Members thereof, can ſweare in judgement, that he will aſſiſt any forces raiſed by Subjects, againſt the forces raiſed by their Sovereign, when it hath beene ſo fully and amply declared by all theſe Churches, and by their cheife Worthies ſucceſſively in all times, that 'tis altogether unlawfull for any Subjects to take up Armes againſt their Sovereigne, though a Tyrant, though a perſecuter of the Goſpell, though never ſo wicked and ungodly, as is to be ſeene in our owne Homilies againſt Rebellion, in the Acts and Monuments of our Martyrs, in the Harmony of Confeſſions of the reformed Churches, in *Luther, Calvin, Occolampadius, Zwinglius, Bucer, Peter Martyr, Capito, Bullinger*, and many other forraigne Divines, as alſo in multitudes of our moſt famous and pious Engliſh Divines, whoſe teſtimonies, with the teſtimonies of many others, I am credibly informed had beene long ſince, for the ſatisfaction of thoſe that queſtion it, faithfully publiſhed by an Orthodox Divine (now a priſoner in Ely Houſe) had not ſome of the Houſe of Commons prevented him by ſeizing upon his book whileſt it was in the Preſſe, as fearing all ſuch information of the people.

3. *Quer.* How any man that hath taken either the Oath of Supremacy, or the Oath of Allegiance, or the late Proteſtation, can without perjury *ipſo facto* ſweare, that he will according to his power aſſiſt the forces raiſed and continued by both Houſes of Parliament againſt the forces raiſed by the King, ſeeing all thoſe three Oathes are ſo flatly and fully contrary to this part of this Oath, of all the reſt: as firſt in the Oath of Supremacy

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we sweare, That we did testifie, and declare in our consciences, that the Kings Highnesse is the only Supreme Governour of this Realme, &c. and as well in all Spirituall or Ecclesiasticall things or causes, as Temporall; and if so, the just power of raising forces, and other power of the sword doth only belong to Him, and none ought to raise any forces, or exercise any other power of the sword, without His consent, and without expresse authority derived from Him; the power of the sword being that which principally makes and maintaines the Supremacy, and therefore ascribed by the Apostle to the supreme power only, Rom 13. 4. He beareth not the sword in vaine, for he is the Minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evill: and to grant the Parliament a just power of raising forces without the Kings consent (much more to grant them power of raising Armes contrary to His Proclamation, and other expresse Commands, and they against the forces raised by the King) is to set up two supreme Powers in one Kingdome, and so two swords one against another, and both to the ruin of the whole Kingdome.

Again, we sweare in the same Oath, That we would beare faith and true Allegiance to the Kings highnesse his Heires, &c. and that we would to our power assist and defend all Jurisdictions, Priviledges, Preheminencies, and Authorities granted or belonging to the Kings Highnesse; his Heires, &c. or united and annexed to the Imperiall Crowne of the Realme. As also in the Oath of Allegiance we swear, That we would beare faith and Allegiance to His Majesty, His Heires, &c. and that we would defend Him and them to the utmost of our power against all conspiracies and attempts whatsoever, which should be made against his or their persons, their Crowne and dignity, either by reason of any Sentence or Declaration of the Pope or otherwise; and that we would do our best endeavour to disclose and make knowne unto His Majesty his Heires, &c. all treasons, and traiterous conspiracies, which we should know or heare of, to be against him or any of them. And lastly in our late Protestation, we sweare to maintaine and defend with our lives, and powers and estates, according to the duty of our Allegiance, His Majesties royall person, Honour, & Estate; & to our power, & as far as lawfully we may, to oppose, & by all good means to endeavour to bring to condigne punishment all such as should either by force, plots, conspiracies or other wise do any thing to the contrary. Now whether the assisting of forces raised by some of the Kings Subjects against the forces raised by the King, be not expressly and fully contrary to all these particulars promised and sworn in all these Oathes, let any indifferent man judge: as (to name some contrarieties for many) 1. Whether it be not usurpation or incroachment upon the Jurisdictions, Priviledges, Preheminences

minences or Authority granted or belonging to the Kings Highnesse, and united and annexed to the Imperiall Crowne, and so flatly contrary to the Oath of Supremacy. 2. Whether it be not an attempt, if not a conspiracy, made against either the Kings Person, or his Crowne and Dignity, and so fully contrary to the Oath of Allegiance. 3. Whether it be not hazardous to the Kings Person, scandalous to His Honour, and detrimental to His Estate, and so directly contrary to the late Protestation. Lastly, whether it be not a breach of that faith, duty, and loyall subjection, which both by the bond of Allegiance, and by the commandement of Almighty God (as the Statute acknowledgeth 7. *Jac.* cap. 6.) we ought to beare to His Majesty, and so contrary to all three Oathes, and to his expresse command, who is called to witness both in them and this. For my part, I appeale only to that which is most concerned, and in most perill, I meane the conscience of every one that hath taken the former Oathes, and is required to this, wishing that every one that hath forgotten whether he ever tooke the Oaths of Supremacy and Allegiance or not, (as I feare there are not a few such) that he would consult with himselfe, and the Statutes which enioyne those Oathes, viz. 1. *Eliz. c. 1.* & 5. *Eliz. c. 1.* and 3. *Jacob. c. 4.* & 7. *Jacob. 6.* the comparing of this new Oath with those former Oaths would occasion a multitude of *Queries*, had some men the liberty of staring them; I shall be bold only to point at one, which in order to the preceding *Queries* upon this part of this Oath makes the fourth.

4. *Quer.* Whether the taking of a new Oath, and recommending and tending it to others, which is contrary to the Oath of Allegiance, as this new Oath is, do not render the persons so doing, guilty of the breach, and liable to the penalty of that branch in that Statute 3. *Jacob. cap. 4.* expressed in these words: And further be it enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That if any person or persons at any time, after the tenth of June, shall either upon the seas, or in any other place, within the Dominions of the Kings Majesty, his heires, or successours, put in practice to absolve, perswade, or withdraw any of the Subjects of the Kings Majesty, or of his heirs, or successours of this Realme of England from their naturall obedience to His Majesty, His Heires, or Successours, or to reconcile them to the Pope or See of Rome, or to move them or any of them, to promise obedience to any pretended authority of the See of Rome, or to any other Prince State, or Potentate, That then every such Person, their procurers, counsellours, ayders and maintainers, knowing the same, shall be to all intents adjudged Traitors, and being thereof lawfully convicted, shall have judgement, suffer and forfeit, as in cases of high Treason,

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And if any such person, as aforesaid, &c. shall be willingly absolved, or withdrawne as aforesaid, or willingly reconciled, or promise obedience to any such pretended authority, Prince, State, or Potentate, as aforesaid. That every such person or persons, their procurers, counsellors, ayders, and maintainers, knowing the same, shall be to all intents adjudged Traytors, and being thereof lawfully convicted, shall have judgement, suffer, and forfeit, as in case of high treason. See the like Stat. 23. *Eliz. cap. 1.*

I could wish, that you would propound this Querie privately to some honest, able, faithfull Lawyer, and let mee know his resolution, it being of great and high concernment.

5. *Quer.* Whether the swearing, that we will according to our power and vocation, assist the forces raysed and continued by both Houses of Parliament, against the forces raysed by the King, doth not sweare us up to do that, which will bring us within compass of high Treason, declared by that Statute of 25. *Edw. 3. cap. 2.* wherein it is declared by the King at the request of the Lords and Commons in that Parliament assembled, That it is high Treason to compass or imagine the death of our Lord the King, or of our Ladie His Queene, or of their eldest Sonne and heire, of if a man do levy warre against our Lord the King in His Realme, or be adherent to the Kings enemies in his Realme, giving to them ayd and comfort in the Realme or elsewhere, and thereof be probably attainted of open deed by people of their condition; I believe, when the established Law of this Land comes to be in force againe, it will puzzle all the Lawyers of this Kingdom to assoile us of that guilt, by the subtillest interpretations they can invent. And truly I doe not yet value either soule or body at so low a rate, as to venture cyther upon such an hazard.

But suppose that it should not be found high treason, yet I have another Querie to put concerning this oath, that will make many looke, before they leape into it, lest they thereby leape out of a great part of their estates; and that is this.

6. *Quer.* Whether the taking this part of this oath and practising accordingly, doe not expose as many as have Offices, Fees, Annuities, Honours, Lordships, Castles, Mannors, Lands, Tenements, and other possessions and hereditaments of the Kings gifts and grants, (which are through out this Kingdome a considerable number) to an inavoydable forfeiture thereof, when as by those two Statutes, viz. 11. *Hen. 7. cap. 13.* & 19. *Hen. 7. cap. 2.* it is enacted, That every person or persons within the Realme of England or Wales; that have any such offices, fees, annuities, &c. & doe not in person attend upon the King, being in person in wars against his enemies and



and Rebels within the same Realme or without, for repressing and subduing of them and their mischeivous purpose, shall forfeit all his offices, fees, annuities, &c. and that all the Kings gifts, grants, and letters patents, whereby they enjoy them, shall be utterly annulled, void, of none effect, and at the Kings pleasure: unless it be such, as have speciall licence under the Kings signe Manuall or signet, or else have such unfeigned sickenesse, letting, or disease, that he may not in his person come to do that attendance.

The same Statute, as they require such attendance upon the Kings Person in his warres, more especially from such men as have any promotion from the King, so they declare also, that every Subject by the duty of his Allegiance is bounden to serve and assist his Prince and Sovereigne Lord at all seasons when need shall require, and what he shall be adjudged worthy to forfeit or suffer, that shall faile of that duty, any knowing Lawyer will soone informe you.

7. *Quer.* How can any man sweare in Righteousnesse, that he will assist the forces raised and continued by both Houses of Parliament against the forces raised by the King; when by the Lawes of the Land it is enacted, that no manner of person or persons, whatsoever he or they be that attend upon the King and Sovereigne Lord of this Land for the time being in his person, &c. or be in other places by his commandment in his warres within this Land or without, shall for the same be either convicted or attaint of high Treason, or any other offences, either by Act of Parliament or otherwise by any proceffe of Law, whereby to suffer any losse or damage, but for that deed and service to be utterly discharged for any vexation, trouble or losse, and if any act or acts, or other proceffe after the time of that act shall happen to be made contrary to that act, that then that Act or Acts or other proceffe of the Law whatsoever shall stand and be utterly void, 11. Hen. 7. cap. 1.

It is no wonder then, if in this new covenant, when we sweare to assist the forces raised and continued by the two Houses of Parliament against the forces raised by the King, that necessary restriction or limitation (so carefully inserted in the late Protestation,) viz. As far as lawfully I may, be here in this oath wholly omitted; when as the established lawes of the Land or in so many things so fully contrary to all such assistance, that if we had sworne only to assist the Parliaments forces against the Kings forces, as farre as lawfully we may, we had sworne not to assist them at all, but to our utmost to resist and repress them.

And whereas 'tis further intimated in this part of this Oath, and in that which



which followeth, by way of aggravation against the Kings Forces, that they were raised without the consent of both Houses of Parliament: I would willingly bend an eare either to *Prin* himselfe (that great pretender to Law and Parliaments, though a Traitor to both as well as to his King) or to any other that shall please to tell mee of any one act of Parliament, or any other established Law of this Land, that doth allow the two Houses of Parliament in any case whatsoever to raise any forces without the consent of the King, much lesse against the Kings consent, and against the Kings forces: or (which is a bold challenge of one that is no Lawyer) that doth expressly bind the King in no case whatsoever (no not for His owne safety and preservation, nor for the safety and preservation of His Kingdome, of the true Religion, of the Lawes of the Land, and liberties of the Subject, &c.) to raise any forces without the consent of the two Houses of Parliament. And if in any case the King may raise forces without the consent of the two Houses of Parliament, then surely much more in the present case, when not onely all possibility of consent from the two Houses was impossibilized, but the two Houses themselves had actually raised forces without the Kings consent, and had seized upon the Kings Castles and Armes, and held them against him. But I have said too long amongst Acts and Statutes, the proper Authenticks, of Lawyers: I returne to the Divine, of whom I desire to favour most; and with his leave and liking, I passe to the next clause of the Oath; and that is yet more desperate, if more desperate can be, for having worne onely in this last clause, That we will according to our power, &c. assist the publique open Forces raised and continued by the two Houses of Parliament, against the Forces raised by the King, we are required in the next clause to sweare; That we will according to our power also assist all private and close conspirators in whatsoever they shall attempt or do, either against the Kings Forces, or against the King himselfe, His Queen, the Prince, or any other, so that what they attempt or do, be but for the advantage of both Houses, and their forces now on foot; the words import no lesse, he that runs may read it. And will likewise assist all other persons that shall take this Oath in what they shall do in pursuance thereof, &c.

This is a hard saying, who can beare it? nay, that is too too gentle a saying for it? This is a most terrible saying, what Christian, but will tremble at it?

For first, What if the Turke, Pope, or Spaniard shall by their agents or instruments, do ought in the pursuance of this businesse (as I verily beleive some of them have done too much) if those agents or instruments will but take

take this oath (as certainly they may with no small advantage to their Masters) must I vow and covenant to assist them?

3. What if any Jesuits, or Jesuited Papists shall joyne in the pursuance of the Cause? Must I swear to assist them? Why then is there in the Introduction to this oath such a loud complaint made of a Popish Army now on foot &c. It seems, that it is not their being Popish that troubles them, but their being an Army against their designe, for it appears by this clause of this oath, That if an Army of Papists would assist them against the Kings Forces, and take but this oath, they should have their oaths, and the oaths of as many as they can prevaile with, to swear that they will assist them in whatsoever they shall doe in that way. I will not question their assisting of Anabaptists, Brownists, and other Sectaries, they are so deep in their protection and assistance already, that there needs no swearing to assist them.

But what thinke you in the third place, what if Monopolizers, Patentees, Projectors, scandalous Ministers, &c. which not long since were rendred the very bane of the Kingdome, & unworthy to live; may what if notorious Rogues, Theeves, Plunderers, Robbers, Murderers, incestuous persons, perjured person, traitors & assassinses shal to former impieties adde the taking this oath? am I not likewise required by this clause to swear to assist them, and every of them. To leave persons, & come to things; perhaps the things wherein I must swear to assist all persons that shall take this oath, will prove such, as that I may lawfully swear to assist any persons in, be they otherwise never so lewd and wicked. Well, suppose that, (though as God abhors wicked mens sacrifices, so where I know them to be such, I like not to be their assistants or companions in their most specious undertakings) yet let us examine what things they are that we must swear to assist them in; why the oath it selfe tells us plainly, and without any limitation, that we must assist them in what they shall do in the pursuance thereof, that is (as far as I am able to construe it) in whatsoever they shall do for the assistance or advantage of the forces raised by the two Houses, against the forces raised by the King; and here ariseth a fourth Quarry, (quie it that can) What if any person or persons shall in the pursuance of this business, rob, spoyle, or plunder any of the Kings Subjects? What if he, or they shall betray, abuse, or murder their ownefathers, brothers, Masters, or friends? What if they shall preach or print horrid lyes and blasphemies, besides old rotten ends of long since condemned Heresies mixt with new Sedition, Treason, and Rebellion? Nay what if any person or persons shall in that pursuance mentioned, attempt the deposing of Our Sovereigne Lord the King, or (which is somewhat more

more to be trembled at in the very naming) the killing of Him, His royall Consort, and all His hopefull Children? Doe not as many as take this Oath, swear to assist them, and every of them that shall commit these & all these detestable execrable wickednesses, when they swear that they will assist every one that shall take this Oath, without exception, in whatsoever he shall doe in the pursuance of that their Cause, without restriction? Yes doubtlesse, unlesse they swear with some mentall reservation, which is Jesuiticall, or with some reservation or all (as 'tis said, some of the Lords rooke the whole Oath) which in effect made it no Oath, but a Mock-oath. And therefore that fornamed limitation, *As far as lawfully I may*, might well have beene here also inserted, had it seemed good to the Contrivers of this Oath. But 'tis likely they have some cause to the contrary; or whether they did or not, I am sure wee have just cause from hence to suspect, that this Oath aims at more then yet the Contrivers of it dare discover. And let them now ascend never so high, or dig never so deep, be it to dare Heaven with an attempt, or to ransacke Hell for one, this clause of this Oath once taken, will assure them of companions.

There is but one piece more of this new Oath, besides the close and scale of all, that remaines to be opened, viz. *And will directly or indirectly adhere unto, nor shall willingly assist the Forces raised by the King, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament*, and that hath beene already examined in the unveyling the proceeding parts thereof. All therefore that I shall superadde concerning it shall be wrapt up in this one Question.

*Quest.* What if God in his infinite mercy to this Nation, shall please so to open the eyes of the blinded misled people thereof, or so to unstop their dull and heavy ears, and so to mollifie and humble their hard rebellious hearts, that yet once againe they shall see with their eyes, heare with their eares, and understand with their hearts those things that belong to their peace and happinesse? and to that purpose, both see and heare and understand, that their Sovereigne Lord the King is in the right, and the Lords and Commons in Parliament are in an error? that 'tis He that hath raised Forces (or rather God most miraculously by Him) for the safety of His owne Person, and for the defence of the true Protestant Religion, the Lawes of the Land, the just priviledges of Parliament, and the Liberties of the Subject, when others raised tumults, commotions, and rebellion, to the inexpressible perill of the utter ruining and subverting of all those our Nations greatest blessings? what I say, if God of his unspeakable mercy to this Nation, and just vindication of Truth, shall make us to see and acknowledge this? Shall wee before hand so swear our selves out of all

mercy, by this last clause of this Oath, that either wee will not dare to acknowledge it when God shall manifest it; or if wee doe acknowledge it, wee cannot either directly or indirectly make peace with, or subminister helpe and assistance unto those Forces of our most gracious King, raised up by God for his owne Glory, our Soveraignes safety, and our owne, and our posterities preservation and comfort, without being perjured. Lord keep thou our feet out of this snare.

Thus have I at last gotten through each part of this Covenant, except only that which I but now called the seale thereof, in these words: *And this Vow and Covenant I make in the presence of God the searcher of all hearts, with a true intention to performe the same, as I shall answer it at the great day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed.* Had this Vow and Covenant beene made only of such things as are true and just, and knowne, so to be unto all that are required to enter into it, the setting of this Seale had beene requisite and necessary; but the Vow and Covenant it selfe being such (as it appears to be by the searching into it) that no one intire clause of it can be taken (at least not of the promissory part) without transgressing foully against one or more of those three inseparable conditions of a justifiable Oath: in my apprehension, the requiring us to set to this Seale should be enough to terrifie all men (that know what the affixing to such a Seale meaneth) from daring to enter into the place where this Covenant is taken, much more from entring into this Covenant it selfe, and setting this soul-scarring Seale thereunto. For how shall I (may everry such man say) how shall I make such a Covenant as this in the presence of Almighty God the searcher of all hearts? when he that searcheth my heart knoweth that some parts of it, I understand not what they meane, some parts I doubt of whether they be true, some parts I know to be illegall and unjust; and to some parts I have already once, twice or oftner sworne the just contrary, calling the same Almighty God the searcher of all hearts to witnesse thereunto, and to be avenged on me if I made it not good? And how shall I pawne all the mercy which I hope for at that great and terrible day of the Lord to all the wrath and judgement that shall be revealed upon the truth of my intention of performing this Covenant? when either my heart already tells me, or may soone tell me, that I intend no such thing, or to be sure it will be told me in that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, that no such thing ought to have beene so much as intended, much lesse sworne by me?

Thus have you (most intimate of friends) both my judgement of this new Oath, and my earnest request for yours, seconded with your prayers.

If

If you should chance to have rashly taken this Oath your selfe, ere these *Queries* come to your hands, (as who in these tempting, turning times, can be confident of any mans constancy?) yet I hope, through Gods blessing upon them, they may so work upon you, as to cause you to reflect upon what you have done with sorrow, and to resolve against the doing what you have thereby inconsiderately promised; with spirit and courage; knowing that it is a resolved case in point of conscience, That in rash and unlawfull Oathes, *Qui non mutat, dupliciter peccat, & quia injuste iuravit, & quia facit quid non debet*: Hee that alters not his resolution, doth bleth his sinne, because hee both sweareth unjustly, and then doeth that which hee ought not to doe. And holy David did exceedingly blisse both God, the advice of a woman, and the woman her selfe that gave it, for keeping him of from performing a rash and unjust Vow that hee had made; *1 Sam. 25*. You have scene my fidelity, let mee see yours: and whatsoever answer you returne, Direct it to my Brother of Christ Church, who is I my selfe am

Your faithfull friend and Brother

in the Lord Christ;



The Vow and Covenant appointed by the Lords and Commons  
 Assembled in Parliament, to be taken by every man in the City of Lon-  
 don, Westminster, the Suburbs and Liberties thereof, and throughout  
 the whole Kingdom of Great Brittain, 1643.

**I** A. B. humbly acknowledging of his Divine Majesty, declare my heart-  
 ly sorrow for my sins past, and the sins of this Nation, which have deserv-  
 ed the calamities and judgments it has now be upon it. And my true inten-  
 tion is, by Gods grace, to endeavour the amendment of my罪恶 ways. And  
 thus I do abhor and detest the said wicked and treacherous design lately dis-  
 covered, and that I never again will give my assent to the execution  
 thereof, but will, according to my power and duty, oppose and resist the  
 same, and all other of the like nature. And in case any other like designe shall  
 hereafter come to my knowledge, I will make such timely discovery, as I shall  
 conceive may best conduce to the preventing thereof. And whereas I doe in  
 my conscience believe, that the Forces raised by the two Houses of Parlia-  
 ment, are raised and continued for their just defence, and for the defence of  
 the true Protestant Religion, and Liberties of the Subject, against the Force  
 raised by the King: I doe here in the presence of Almighty God, de-  
 clare, vow and covenant, that I will, according to my power and vocation,  
 assist the Forces raised and continued by both Houses of Parliament against  
 the Forces raised by the King without their consent. And will likewise assist  
 all other persons that shall take this Oath, in what they shall doe in pursuance  
 thereof: and will not directly or indirectly adhere unto, nor shall willingly as-  
 sist the Forces raised by the King, without the consent of both Houses of Par-  
 liament. And this Vow and Covenant I make in the presence of Almighty  
 God, the searcher of all hearts, with a true intention to performe the same,  
 as I shall answer at the great day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be dis-  
 closed.

FINIS.



